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The Man who Stamps.

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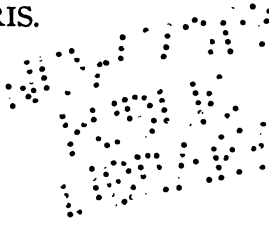
THE

MAN WHO TRAMPS.

A STORY OF TO-DAY.

BY

LEE O. HARRIS.



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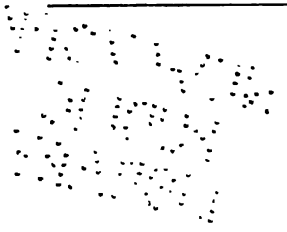

PREFACE.

In writing the story which I here offer to the public I had a higher ambition than merely to amuse the reader. Although I present it as a romance, and expect it to be criticised as such, I hope the reader will find in it food for his reason, as well as pleasure for his imagination. It has been no easy task to write upon this subject, where characters are necessarily drawn from the most vicious classes of society, and avoid that coarseness of diction which would appear naturally to belong to such associations. I may not always have succeeded in this, yet I hope the reader will be my witness that I have only used such expressions when they were necessary to the truthfulness of the picture.

It may be objected that, as a story of to-day, it is too full of startling incidents to be natural, yet when we remember the glaring and ghastly headlines, which stare at us from the columns of the press every day, I think the candid reader will confess that the scenes are not overdrawn.

With respect to the arguments introduced through the story I have nothing to say. They embrace such thoughts as came to me at the time of writing, and shall go for what they are worth.

THE MAN WHO TRAMPS.

CHAPTER I.

THE RUNAWAY.

SCENE, a farm house a few miles from the town of Ayre, in Indiana. Time, the evening of July 18, 1876.

"I tell you, Jane, you are too hard on the boy. He has been at work in the field all day, and it is too hard to badger him in this way as soon as he sets his foot in the house. Let the poor fellow have a little rest."

"John Shannon, you're a fool. You're always taking the part of that impudent, lazy rascal. I told you when you brought him here, ten years ago, that he would worry the life out of me, and now you see how it is. And since my young gentleman has grown too big to be whipped he grows worse. It's nothing but mope and sulk the whole time he is

about the house, unless he gets hold of a book or a newspaper, and then you might as well try to move a stump. For my part, I wish there wasn't a newspaper ever printed. All they're fit for is to make young ones lazy, and old fools like you neglect their work to dabble in their nasty politics. But I'll have no idle paupers about me, I tell you!" And Mrs. Shannon threw herself sulkily into a chair and fanned herself with her apron.

"Jane, you're wrong. Harry is not lazy. He is only sixteen, and yet he does as much work in the fields as a man. And at school, his teacher tells me, he is industrious and obedient, and advances rapidly in his studies."

"At school!" exclaimed Mrs. Shannon with a sneer. "Where's the use of sending such pauper brats to school? What good will it do him? Three months of his work lost every winter to stuff his head with all this book nonsense, that only makes him proud, and lazy, and saucy."

John Shannon sat wearily down on the bench beside the door; perhaps he thought that Harry Lawson was not the only one who suffered from Mrs. Shannon's petulant temper.

"I entered into an agreement to send the boy to school when I took him from the men who had him in charge," he said. "Besides, it would have been

my duty, even if there had been no contract, and a boy works none the worse because he is intelligent. And as to his being saucy, I have seen nothing like that about him. He appears to me to be gentleness itself."

"That's the way, John Shannon," replied his wife with a snap. "You're always ready enough to take sides against your poor over-worked wife. I tell you he is saucy and impudent. Only yesterday, when he came in from the field at noon, he threw himself down on the bench on the porch like a lazy lout, and took up the paper to read. I says, 'Come, young man, I'll have no lazy bones about me. That churnin's to be done, and the sooner you get at it the better.' Well, what do you think he said? He said, 'Mother Shannon, do let me rest a bit. I'm tired!' The impudent young cub! I just told him in so many words that I'd have no lazy paupers round me, when he rose to his feet with his face as red as fire, and says he, 'Mother Shannon, no one is a pauper who works for his bread. I work for all I get in this house, and I work hard, too.' That's what he said. There's impudence for you! I could hardly keep my hands off of him. But I snatched that paper away from him pretty quick, I tell you, and I kept my young gentleman busy at that churnin' till it was time to go to the field."

"But, Jane," replied the farmer, "it is too hard on the boy to do a man's work in the field and a woman's work at the house, too."

"And so, John Shannon," replied the woman, "I'm to slave my life out of me that your fine pauper brat may sit and read his newspaper! That's just like you, though. You think of everybody before you do of your poor wife."

"Jane, you are unreasonable," replied her husband. "You know well enough that I have frequently offered to hire a girl to help you in your work, and you have always refused. Why will you not let me do so now?"

"Hire a girl, indeed!" cried the irate woman. "John Shannon, do you want us to go to the poor house in our old days? No, I'll not have it. You shall not throw money away just to favor that lazy rascal. I can't understand why you think so much of him as all that; you must have some reason that you will not tell me. It would be just like you, John Shannon."

"Don't be silly, Jane," answered the farmer with a sigh. "You know the poor boy was brought from New York, with a great many others, by a charitable society. They were given out to persons who agreed to pay their railroad fare, to furnish them homes, and to educate them. But here comes the boy; don't

wound his feelings any more. See how sorrowful the poor fellow looks." And the kindly eye of the farmer dwelt with genuine pity on the poor orphan boy.

"His feelings!" cried the woman. "Yes, everybody has feelings but your wife. Little you think of her feelings. I tell you I will say what I please, and if your young gentleman doesn't like it he may lump it; that's all."

John Shannon made no reply, and there entered upon the scene the boy who had been the innocent cause of all this contention and bickering. He was a pale, delicate youth, with dark hair, regular and handsome features, which some would have pronounced too effeminate. His eyes were large, black and bright, and with a rather dreamy expression, yet to a close observer they contained a light which only waited the opportunity to kindle into the fire of heroism. His hands were small and well-formed, but browned by labor in the sun. He set the two pails of water that he had just brought from the spring upon the bench beside the kitchen door, and turned toward Mrs. Shannon a look which said, "What next?"

"Now go and split the stove wood for to-morrow's baking," said the woman.

The boy turned to obey.

"Hold on, Harry," said John Shannon, rising, "I'll split the wood, boy. Sit down and rest."

Mrs. Shannon bit her lips and frowned, but said nothing. The boy went to the porch in front of the house and sat down on the bench, but not to read. He gazed dreamily out across the fields that lay before him. The woods beyond were growing indistinct in the twilight gloom that moved slowly on from the east, and into the soul of the boy crept the shadows of the past—a past, brief, it is true, but full of sorrows that had darkened his young life, as the evening shades darkened the landscape.

Dim as the outline of the distant wood rose a half-remembered scene before his mental vision. A cottage in the suburbs of a great city. A fair-haired, blue-eyed woman, at whose feet he sat, or about whose knees he clung with childish affection, or who bent tenderly above him at night to press fond kisses upon his sleepy lids until he sank into sweet forgetfulness. Then there came memories of a dark-haired, dark-whiskered man whom he used to follow with tottering steps to the gate in the morning and meet at the same place in the evening with glad shouts of "papa, papa," and who used to snatch him up in his stalwart arms and press him fondly to his heart, then set him astride his shoulder and prance like a boy up the gravel walk to meet the blue-eyed woman,

whom he clasped with the child tenderly in his arms. The vision faded out, and was replaced by another, in which that stalwart man lay stretched, pallid and helpless, upon the bed, and there were light steps and whispered words by strange people, who came stealing in and out, until at last there were tears and sobs, and the blue-eyed woman clasped him convulsively to her bosom and called him her poor fatherless boy.

Then the little cottage and its surroundings faded away, and another scene arose somewhat more distinctly. This was of a little room at the top of a high house, amid the noise and bustle of the great city, and of his pale, sad-eyed mamma toiling wearily with her needle for bread. There were days and days of this monotonous scene, but at last came again the pallid form on the bed—the fair-haired woman this time—but there was no gentle stealing about the room by kind neighbors, no low whispered words of sympathy, but once in a great while a little, dark, quick-stepping man came and looked at his mamma, and left something in a little bottle which she had hardly strength to reach from the chair at the bedside, and went away without a word. And the poor woman would draw the child's head against her bosom and say, "Father in heaven, befriend my poor orphan boy."

At last came the memory of a time when he grew

hungry, oh so hungry, and he called to his mamma, but she did not answer him, and he thought she was asleep. He took her thin, pale hand that had fallen over the edge of the bed, and tried to wake her, but she lay so still, and her hand was so cold, that he was chilled with a fear he could not understand, and stole away into the corner of the room and sobbed himself asleep. When he awoke his mamma was gone, and a great rough man came and carried him away, very tenderly though, and so kindly that he was not afraid, but lay in his arms and cried for his mamma.

The next scene that arose through the fast deepening shadows was of a large house on a place surrounded by water. This house was filled with children of all ages, who used to sleep in little cots set in a row along the wall, and eat at a long, bare table in a great hall. How long he remained here he could not remember, but the next change came when he and hundreds of other children journeyed westward on the cars, stopping at various towns, where people came to examine them as they might inspect sheep offered at the market, and to select and purchase such as suited their fancy. Then he remembered that they came to the town of Ayre, in Indiana, as he afterward learned, where he was chosen by John Shannon, his present master, and taken home, six miles into the country, in a great,

jolting wagon. He recalled the first night in the little close room, which was assigned to him in the farmer's house, and which he had occupied through all the long ten years that he had been sheltered by the farmer, and scolded and beaten by the farmer's wife. Tears stole down the cheeks of the boy as his mind flitted to that dimly-remembered past, but he brushed them away, shut out the sweet but sorrowful recollection, and sat pondering upon his present situation. He loved and honored the farmer, for he had been a kind master to him; but he hated the farmer's wife with all his boyish ardor, for she had made his life a torment. There could be no reason for the woman's conduct, except a naturally petulant and tyrannical disposition, which exercised itself upon the defenseless boy as being the object most available for the purpose. John Shannon had endeavored to do his duty by the poor orphan lad who had fallen to his care. He fed him well, clothed him as well as his wife would permit, and sent him to school three months every winter. His school-days were days of comparative happiness to the boy. Naturally intelligent and ambitious, he won the favor of the various teachers under whom he studied from time to time, and who encouraged him in the acquisition of knowledge, and he soon made himself master of all the branches taught in the country school

which he attended. And he even progressed beyond this by the aid of books borrowed from the masters, and under such instruction as they willingly gave him before and after school hours. The study of these books at home was one source of complaint for Mrs Shannon. Almost entirely uneducated herself, she could not appreciate the yearning desire of the boy for knowledge, nor understand that ambition to rise to better things which burned in his soul and gave shape to all his actions. Like the goose in the fable, she had a young eagle for a nestling, and wondered that he should long to exercise his growing pinions in flight. His boyish spirit rebelled against her petty tyranny. He had no antipathy to labor. For John Shannon he would do anything that a boy of his age could do. He worked from morning till night, side by side with the farmer in the field, besides doing innumerable "chores" about the house, both morning and evening. It was not the work. It was the perpetual fault-finding, the cruel taunts of poverty and dependence, that stung his soul, until at last his heart grew sick of such a life, and, as he sat there in the twilight, his whole being thrilled with the sad memories of his early childhood, he resolved to end his bondage—to run away.

With Harry Lawson, to resolve was to act. He stopped not to consider where he should go, nor

what he should do to earn his living. Anywhere to escape the persecutions of his mistress; anything to eat without torment the bread of honest labor.

Yet he thought of the kind-hearted farmer with regret. He, at least, would miss him, and perhaps think him ungrateful. He would like to bid him good-bye, and thank him for his kindness, but to do so would only defeat his object. No, he would write and leave the letter in his room. They would find it in the morning, but he would then be beyond pursuit. While he sat planning thus the night stole on unheeded, and the first intimation he had of the lateness of the hour was the sharp voice of Mrs. Shannon—

"Harry Lawson, are you going to stay up all night? Get off to bed with you; I want to shut up the house. And see that you don't lay snoozing in bed in the morning, when you ought to be out milking the cows. To-morrow's baking day, and I want none of your laziness, I tell you."

Harry arose without a word, and retired to his little room in the loft, but not to sleep. He sat down on the side of the bed till all was still in the house, then, from a nook under the rafters, he took a little piece of candle that he had hidden to enable him to study at night when he wished to do so, and lighting it, sat down on the floor beside the box in which he

kept his clothes, to write his letter. And this is what John Shannon found on the bed next morning, when, after calling the boy several times and getting no answer, he ascended to his room:

MR. SHANNON:—My second father, for as such I will always think of you, I am going to do what you will think very wrong. I am going to run away. I can not stand this life any longer. You have always been kind to me, and I thank you. I hope that my labor has paid you for the expense you have been to on my account. I do not know where I shall go nor what I shall do, but do not be uneasy on my account, for I will get along some way. I will take my clothes, and I hope you think I have paid for them. Good-bye, and don't think hard of me. Good-bye, Mother Shannon; you might have made the poor motherless boy love you, but you have chosen to hate him. I know you will be glad to get rid of me. HARRY LAWSON.

He made a little bundle of the clothes he was wont to wear to church on Sunday, and stole silently out into the darkness.

John Shannon read Harry's letter to his wife, and with a great sobbing sigh walked out to the barn with his head bowed upon his breast. Mrs. Shannon stood for a moment like one dazed with sudden terror, and then sat down and cried as though her heart would break. If Harry could have seen her then he would scarcely have believed the evidence of his senses.

Such paradoxes are there in human nature.

CHAPTER II.

TRAMPS.

It has been truly said that but a small part of the actual evils of war center about the battle-field. It might be as truthfully said that but a small part of those evils cease with the war itself. This is especially so in a country whose armies are made up almost entirely of volunteer citizens. Of this we have a striking example in our own country. The armies of our great civil war were composed principally of volunteers from the manufacturing and producing classes, who, when the war closed, returned to their previous occupations as good citizens as they were before they donned the knapsack and the cartridge-box. But among these, especially toward the close of the struggle, were many from a lower grade of society, from the slums of the cities and towns, and even from the jails and penitentiaries, who, tempted by the large bounties then offered and the chances of plunder, became soldiers in name, though few of them were ever really soldiers in fact. From this

class came the "bummers" and camp-followers of the army, the "bounty-jumpers" and deadbeats generally. When the combat ended the avocation of these men, such as it was, ceased, and they were thrown idle upon the community. The reckless, free life of the army had given them a taste for wandering and a distaste for every species of labor, and following their natural instincts, directed by their acquired habits, they became professional tramps. For a considerable time they pursued their course with but little comment by the citizens, for their numbers were not so great, when scattered over the entire country, as to attract particular attention. They were always ostensibly on the hunt for work, always bound for some special destination, and people believed their well-told stories. But about this nucleus, small at first, began to congregate others, who, profiting by their example, desired to live like them a life of idleness, and tramping spread like a contagion. The return of the army overcrowded the labor market, and as the country began to feel the natural reaction following the inflation of war times, many who honestly desired to labor were thrown out of employment, or were compelled to travel in search of it. A large majority of these, perhaps, found occupation in time, but many, once having tasted of the fountain of indolence, lost all wish to labor, and continued

their pretended search indefinitely. Every great misfortune in any part of the country was seized upon as an excuse for vagrancy, and the land was filled with Kansas sufferers who never saw Kansas, and pretended victims of the great Chicago fire told pitiful tales of loss and suffering, that brought them sympathy and food. The people of both the country and the town, naturally charitable and kind-hearted, only increased the rapidly-growing evil by their well-meant but indiscriminate charity, and this class of persons learned that there was an easier way of getting their bread than by the sweat of their brows. And even after it was well-known that nine-tenths of those asking aid were unworthy, people dreaded to refuse for fear of turning away the tenth man to suffer. In this indiscriminate charity people are always more or less selfish. It is not so much the distress of others which causes them to give, as it is their own pain at beholding misery, and a desire to relieve their own feelings by contributing aid to all who claim to be suffering. So the tramp was well fed, and grew, and multiplied in the land.

Had the evil stopped here, it might have been only a nuisance, like the lazzaroni of Italy, but upon this prolific stock was soon grafted the dangerous communism of France. Vicious agitators, who had tasted of the intoxication of anarchy and bloodshed,

when driven from France found a refuge here. With all the natural instincts of the American tramp, combined with the treachery of the serpent and the ferocity of the tiger, they carried with them a prestige and a power which soon made itself felt. Then the tramp ceased to be merely a nuisance; he became a terror. Then followed scenes of riot and bloodshed that made the nation grow pale. The pernicious doctrines that had convulsed France, and dyed her rivers red with blood, were openly preached upon the streets of our cities, and gained many followers among those who either had not the intelligence or the inclination to see to what terrible scenes of misery and devastation they tended.

Then the tramp became a power in the land. His influence was felt in politics, and in nearly all the social relations. Always on the watch for every convulsion in society, he turned it to his own advantage. Honest laborers, thinking to better their condition, struck for higher wages or for the redress of grievances; as soon as the thing was done, it passed into the hands of the tramp, who, having nothing to lose, could afford to take great risks. Riots were inaugurated by them that they might gratify their desire for destruction and for plunder, and under the name of workingmen they brought reproach upon the name of labor. The true laboring man saw the evil genius

he had invoked take the affair out of his hands, and in his name do deeds that sent a thrill of horror through the land.

These tramps, although combined in one great organization, were of many grades and degrees. The tramp proper, the original tramp, was nothing but an easy-going, indolent vagrant, beating his way through the world with no ambition but to live without labor. He had the slouching, filthy habits and pitiful whine of the professional beggar, and was simply a great nuisance. There was another grade, composed of criminals, who ascended in degrees of crime from robbing a hen-roost to highway robbery, and even to murder. He made his home principally in the great cities, and only occasionally resorted to the country, and then only for purposes of plunder or to escape the vigilance of the law. The third class might be denominated the political tramps, led by the men of whom I have before spoken. They were cunning and ambitious, and prided themselves on being philosophers. They talked and taught their inflammable doctrines on all occasions, and were arrogant and insolent as well as vicious. The first class could be endured; the second suppressed by the strong arm of the law; but the last carried with them a pestilence which permeated society, and threatened the very life of the nation.

Perhaps in no other country in the world, France not excepted, could these men have found a more congenial soil in which to scatter the seeds of their terrible doctrines. In a society so mixed; a population made up of all nationalities; of refugees from all the despotisms of the world; men who understood nothing and cared less about our government and our institutions; whose ideas of liberty and of license were synonymous—in such a society the specious doctrines of the commune soon took root, and began at once to bear fruit.

But I anticipate. On the night of July 18, 1876, while Harry Lawson was preparing for his flight, a scene was enacting between thirty and forty miles from farmer Shannon's to which I wish the reader to accompany me. On an elevated piece of ground, or rather a heavily wooded island, surrounded by a large swamp, also covered with timber, and in turn encircled by a forest of considerable extent, were assembled some fifteen or twenty tramps. A bright fire was burning, which threw a vivid glare upward upon the dark green foliage of the trees, and brought into bold relief their trunks for a circle of twenty yards. Beyond this all was darkness, weird and intense. Even above appeared to arch a dome of blackness, resting upon the tree-tops, for the night was cloudy and no star was visible. About this fire were

grouped several of the tramps, busily engaged in cooking. It seemed to be an occasion of more than ordinary importance, and the preparations were apparently for a feast. Spitted upon sharp sticks were chickens roasting, which some careful farm-wife would miss in the morning, and charge the "varmints" with the theft. There were crocks of milk and jars of butter, stolen from some spring-house, where they had been set to cool, eggs from the farmer's barn, and potatoes from his garden, and roasting ears from his field. There was even a slaughtered pig suspended from the limb of a tree, steaks from which were broiling on the coals. There were apples, and peaches, and melons; in short all the requisites for a grand feast. Oh, your tramp is a great forager. He will come to your door hungry-looking and apparently tired almost to death, and beg for a mouthful of food. He has eaten nothing all day. Would you be so kind as to give him a bite to eat. He may even offer to work if he feels morally sure that you have nothing for him to do. This is a risk, however, which few of them are willing to take. They are nearly always of some occupation not followed in your vicinity. In the country they are iron-puddlers or machinists; in the city they are farm-hands. Your eye dwells with compassion on his woe-begone appearance, while his takes in the surroundings of your

hen-house or your pantry. You give him food. Who could refuse that pleading look and mournful voice? He carries it away with him, and if it suits his epicurean palate he eats it, or if he is seeking a rendezvous of tramps he takes it with him to swell the general contribution; but if it is not to his taste he throws it away as soon as he is out of your sight. Afterwards, should occasion demand, and the prospect seem favorable, he will return in the silent watches of the night, that he may not disturb your rest, and your chickens or your provisions disappear, you know not how or where. Yes, your tramp is a skillful forager. If you are particularly kind and pitiful you will be surprised at the number of starving men who come your way. You will wonder why all the tramps pass neighbor A.'s or neighbor B.'s and come to you. My dear sir, or madam, this will continue until you are tired of it and kick the next one out of the house, or, if you are a woman, until you set the dog on him or drive him off with the poker. Then it may cease. Do you wonder at this? I will let you into the secret. Your house is advertised—marked upon the fence, the gate or in some other place, so that the wayfaring man, who is not a fool, may read, "Here is sympathy for indolence. Here is food for idleness. Enter and partake thereof, and

laugh at the foolish people who pay a premium for vagrancy."

If some of the charitable persons who had allowed their sympathy to get the better of their judgment could have seen this assembly, the next tramp who called on them would doubtless have gone away a disappointed man. During the preparation of the meal the tramps kept coming in, all from one direction, one and two at a time. This seemed to indicate that there was but one entrance to the island. This was by means of fallen trees which, although making a circuitous route, made a dry one across the swamp. By the time the cooking was done there were near fifty men assembled about the fire. They now fell to eating like a pack of ravenous wolves, and for a time all were too busy to think of talking, but after the first keen edge of their appetite was somewhat blunted the joke, the laugh and the story began to go round, and before their supper was ended they had grown quite boisterous.

At this juncture a new-comer appeared upon the scene, entering, as the others had done, from the same swamp. This was a man about forty years old, a little above the medium height, with a very dark complexion, dark enough for a mulatto, but with long, straight black hair, and small, restless black eyes, sparkling beneath his projecting brows. His

cheek-bones were prominent and his lips were thin and straight, giving to his features a look of firmness and resolution. The tramps ceased talking as soon as this man appeared. He was evidently expected, and was known to many there, for a whisper ran through the crowd, "That's him. That's Black Flynn;" and several of the men advanced to meet him.

"Have you been to supper, boss?" asked one of the tramps, after the first greetings were over.

"Yes, I have eaten," was the reply. "Feasted like a gentleman on all the delicacies of the season. I called at a house where there was no one at home except a woman. I do not know whether to give fear or pity the credit, but she set before me the best in the house. I see that you also have eaten, and I suspect from the looks of things here that neither pity nor fear are responsible for your feast. The credit is doubtless due to your own exertions."

The tramps laughed. They assembled about this man—this tramp who talked like a scholar—and waited for him to continue.

"Do you know why I have caused you to assemble here?" he asked.

"We don't know nothin' about it, only we was ordered to come," replied one who took upon himself the office of spokesman, and addressed the new-

comer in a peculiarly deep bass voice. As this man plays a prominent part in the drama to be hereafter enacted, I will endeavor to describe him. Perhaps the shortest and most comprehensive description would be to call him a great, burly, red-headed ruffian. His eyes were small and piggish; his nose was flat, and his mouth was large and sensual. His complexion was exceedingly florid, and he had that appearance of filthy dilapidation common to the worst class of tramps. But his most striking peculiarity was his voice. This was deep as the sub bass of an organ, and seemed to proceed from his chest rather than from his mouth. It was a voice that, once heard, could never be forgotten. This man was known to the fraternity of tramps as "Sandy." His real name was Sanford Hines.

"I was at Calusa with Toney Bazin here," continued Sandy, "when we met a cove what guv us the sign, and told us to come to the big swamp to-night. That's all I know."

"How long have you been on this beat, Sandy?" asked Flynn.

"'Bout a month."

"Can you vouch for all here?"

"Every man of 'em," replied Sandy, casting his eyes over the crowd. "They're all right, boss."

"Well, then, let us to business," said Black Flynn.

"Some of you know me personally and some do not. You have all heard of me, and know that I am boss, or master, of this district, and that all members of our fraternity entering my jurisdiction are, for the time, under my orders. That is one of the beauties of our system. A man is free to come and go when and where he pleases, but he is subject to the orders of the 'boss' of the district in which he finds himself. Now, those who know me can vouch for me to those who do not, and I will tell you why, obeying the orders of my superiors, I have called you together at this time. The coal miners in the eastern part of Pennsylvania are about to strike, so it is hoped, and if they do it will be pretty general throughout the State. It will be our business to make it so. Not that we hope to accomplish much for the great cause yet. The time is not ripe. But the more we can stir up this strife between capital and labor, the sooner will the time come to strike to some purpose. There is nothing doing here, nor is there likely to be for some time to come. The orders are to assemble in the neighborhood of the mines and watch the progress of events. Go in twos, or threes at most. Steal your way upon the cars, or any way to get there in the shortest possible time, and there wait for orders. Do you understand?"

"Well, boss, we'll do as you say," replied Sandy.

"But this is the third time we've gone off on a wild-goose chase, and it amounted to nothin'."

"Well," replied Black Flynn, "you may have to go four, five or a dozen times yet and accomplish nothing. But all countries are alike to men of our profession, and the time will come at last, rest assured, when your services will be needed."

"But, boss, we don't all know what this thing means," said Sandy. "You was just braggin' about the tramp bein' so free that he could go anywhere he wanted to, and here we 're ordered away off into the mountains of Pennsylvany, when some of us would rather stay here. How's that for freedom? D—n such freedom, I say. I'm gettin' tired of this thing. It looks to me like we ought to have some say about it ourselves."

"Do you refuse to obey?" said Black Flynn, with a frown. "Have a care, Sandy Hines. The fraternity can better do without you than you without them. Have you forgotten what it has already done for you? Who, by furnishing witnesses to prove an alibi, saved your bull neck from stretching hemp for a certain ugly affair at St. Louis? Who opened the doors of the station-house for you at Cincinnati, when you were good for ten years at hard labor? Who could hang you now, Sandy Hines, if you should play them false? Hold your tongue and obey, and you will be wise."

"Who talks of throwin' off on the fratern'ty, I'd like to know?" said Sandy. "Didn't I say I was a goin'? But, boss, it's nothin' but fair to let a feller know somethin' about this great thing that's goin' to happen after while. I don't half understand it."

"You will know all in good time," replied Black Flynn. "In the meantime do as you are bid, and wait. By day after to-morrow you should all be on the way. Others are already moving in that direction, and we must not be the last;" and with these words he turned and disappeared in the direction from which he came.

The tramps conversed for a time upon this new topic, and then lay down to sleep, all except two. These were Sandy Hines and Toney Bazin, who sat together at some distance from the others.

"Well, I for one ain't goin' without finishin' up that job about old Cartright's money," said Sandy. "To-morrow 's the day he 's to draw the stamps out of the bank, for I heard him tell the man so when I was hid behind the hedge. He promised to pay it over day after to-morrow."

"How much money is tare?" asked Toney.

"'Leven hundred and fifty dollars."

"Mon Dieu! Vell, how you gets him?"

"Why, if there's no chance to tap him over when he comes through the woods from town, he 'll have

to keep it one night in the house, and then we 'll lift it, sure. A feller 'd be purty well heeled with 'leven hundred and fifty dollars."

"Mon Dieu!" exclaimed the Frenchman again.

The matter appeared to be settled for the present, for the men soon followed the example of their fellows and went to sleep.

CHAPTER III.

ON THE ROAD.

HARRY LAWSON turned his face to the east and walked on all night. When morning dawned he found himself on a strange road, tired and hungry, and without a cent in his pocket. He sat down and thought with dismay of his unpleasant situation.

"What shall I do?" he asked himself. "I must eat or I can not walk. I can neither beg nor steal. Well, I will rest awhile, and then walk on again. Something may happen to let me out of my difficulty. Surely no one need either suffer or beg in a country so laden with grain as this."

In a quarter of an hour he resumed his journey. He had proceeded but a few miles when, on turning a bend in the road, he came upon a man engaged in hauling wheat from a field near by. In crossing a ditch at the side of the road a part of the load had fallen off, and, as Harry approached, the man sat on the wagon looking ruefully at the sheaves lying in a tangled heap on the ground.

Here was a chance for our runaway, and he made up his mind in a moment.

"Hello! Want some help?" he called briskly, throwing his bundle down by the side of the fence.

"Yes!" replied the farmer, eagerly. "It's too far to where the men are at work to make them hear, if I call. I will be obliged to you if you will pitch up my load for me, while I build it on again."

"All right," said Harry; "I'll pitch up your load, and then you can give me my breakfast. That will make us even."

The man laughed.

"Well, that's nothing more than fair," he said, and handing Harry the fork, the latter began to toss up the sheaves.

"Tramping?" asked the man at length.

"Traveling," said Harry, without pausing in his work.

"Hunting work?"

"No, only to pay for my breakfast."

"Well, that's better than most of them," laughed the farmer. "They generally hunt the breakfast, and then forget the work."

"Who?" asked Harry.

"Who? why the tramps of course."

"Yes, I've seen some of them," replied the boy. "But I am no tramp."

"What are you then?"

"I told you I was a traveler," was the reply. "A tramp is a beggar. I shall ask for nothing but what I shall pay for, either in work or money."

"That is right, my boy," answered the farmer. "I like your independence. That is the spirit which succeeds. But you are young to be traveling in this way. May I ask where you came from?"

Harry hesitated and did not reply at once.

"I suppose it's none of my business, my boy," said the farmer. "But the country is full of young men and boys, even younger than you appear to be, who leave comfortable homes for some fancied slight or trouble, or sometimes from a mere restlessness which causes them to seek for what they call adventures, and, nine times out of ten, they become worthless tramps. There never was a time in the history of this country when it was so dangerous for boys to be away from the care of their friends. I have no right to ask you to betray your secret, if you have one, but shall I give you a word of advice?"

"I shall be glad to receive it," said Harry. The load was now replaced, and the boy climbed up beside the farmer to ride to the house, which could be seen at no great distance. The man continued:

"My advice is to beware of the tramps. Avoid them, whatever you do. Preserve that honest inde-

pendence which induces you to pay, in some way, for all you receive. If you travel far you will meet them frequently. Have nothing to do with them, or they will make you a vagabond like themselves."

"Never fear, sir," replied Harry. "I will remember your advice."

"And, my boy," continued the farmer. "Whatever may be the troubles at home, it is generally better to bear them than to throw yourself upon the world, without resources, to depend upon charity or chance for your support. Quit this tramping, for it is little better, call it what you may, as soon as you can. If you have a home, return to it at once. If not, get into some employment, however humble, at the very first opportunity. Do not wait for work to suit you, but make yourself suit the work. Many an unemployed man becomes a tramp before he is aware, by refusing work that offers because it does not happen to suit his taste, and this tramping habit has so many fascinations, so much of change and adventure, that, when once formed, there is scarcely a hope of shaking it off. But here we are at my house, and I suspect you need a breakfast, just now, worse than a lecture. Come in."

Harry received a good breakfast, after which the farmer's wife, pleased with the look and manners of the boy, gave him a package of provisions, enough to

last him for the day. He at first demurred, but the farmer insisted that the service he had rendered was fully worth all he had received. On this Harry took the provisions with thanks, and pursued his journey.

During the day he saw a great many tramps. Some were traveling upon the road, some were begging at the houses which he passed, and others lay asleep under the trees and hedges. Occasionally one would try to enter into conversation with him, but he left him as quickly as possible and avoided his questions. Some were careless and indifferent, some were sullen and morose, even vicious looking, while others were quite waggish and merry, and seemed to enjoy their vagabond life immensely. Some carried bundles, and a few tools of various trades—these, however, were, in some cases, honest tradesmen seeking employment —but the majority had nothing but the clothes on their backs. There were men of nearly all nationalities and colors, and of all ages, from the robust youth, just entering into manhood, to the poor decrepit old man, begging his way to the grave. Many were truly objects of pity, but by far the largest number were hearty, able-bodied men. He passed one poor cripple, stumping along on a wooden leg, carrying a bundle over his shoulder. Looking back, he saw this man stop at a house, and his sympathies went out toward him, and he hoped that he might not be turned

away. But a short time after, as he sat at the roadside eating his dinner, whom should he see, stalking by, but this same cripple, a cripple no longer, but with his wooden leg only half concealed in his bundle, and striding along on two as good legs as ever bore a tramp. Having fortified himself with a good dinner, he thought it useless to keep up his little farce, but of course held himself in readiness to renew it when occasion should require. Afterwards, Harry learned that this trick was performed by bending the leg upon the thigh, and securing it there by tying. This, with the addition of wide-legged trowsers and the wooden stump, completed the preparations, and cheated many a tender heart out of unmerited sympathy.

Once during the day he passed a group of three tramps, who had just come from a house near by, and who were cursing terribly at having been refused food, and threatening the inmates with their vengeance. They ceased talking as he approached, but did not molest him. He stopped occasionally at a house for a drink of water, and always found himself regarded with suspicion, and children would run indoors hurriedly, with the whispered exclamation, "Here comes a tramp!" All this was very galling to the proud spirits of the boy, and he finally ceased stopping at the houses, and drank at the running streams.

"Well, what am I better than a tramp?" he said to himself, as he walked along. "I have no home; I am traveling almost aimlessly through the country, without money to pay for lodging or food. I shall be compelled to sleep out of doors by the hedges, or under the trees. I am a tramp to that extent, but I am not a beggar, nor will I ever be one. I will stop this aimless wandering as soon as I get fully beyond the reach of pursuit, and will earn money to pay my way. One is not a tramp simply because he travels afoot, and yet everybody seems to think so."

When evening overtook Harry he was many miles from the scene of his morning's adventure. The provisions given him by the farmer's kind-hearted wife had served him for both dinner and supper, and he now began to look for a place in which to spend the night. The weather was pleasant, and he determined to sleep in the open air. All he required was shelter from the dew. While walking along very slowly, for he was now quite tired out with his long journey, he was startled by a voice which cried out:

"Hello, boy! which way?"

Harry looked in the direction of the sound, and saw a tramp seated in the corner of the fence, eating some food which he had evidently procured at a large house which stood a little way back from the road.

"Which way?" repeated the stranger.

"I am going to Cincinnati," said Harry, for during the day he had decided to go to that city.

"Not going through to-night?" laughed the man.

"No; certainly not," answered Harry.

"Where are you going to bunk?"

"Eh!"

"Where are you going to sleep?"

"In any place that suits me," said Harry, walking on.

The tramp came into the road and walked by his side. The boy saw that he was a man of more than medium height, with very black hair and eyes, and a very dark complexion. He came to the conclusion, from the general appearance of the man, that he had fallen in with a veritable tramp, and that, too, at a time when he most wished to avoid such characters. Yet there was something in the look of this man which commanded a sort of respect, despite his dilapidated appearance and beggarly occupation. He quickened his steps. So did the tramp. He walked slowly. The tramp regulated his pace to suit. For a moment the boy was tempted to turn back and seek shelter at the house, but then he thought of his penniless condition, and walked on. The tramp had been watching him closely, and read his fears aright. At length he said, with a sort of rough kindness in his tone:

"Don't be afraid, boy. I am a tramp, and my business is to beat the world out of a living, but I take from those who are able to give. From your looks I should say you are the next thing to a tramp yourself. Are you hungry? Here!" And he offered a share of his food to the boy.

"No, thank you," said Harry. "I have eaten. I am not hungry."

"You have not told me where you are going to stop to-night," said the tramp.

"I do not know," replied Harry. Then with a sudden thought, "I think I will walk to-night."

"Walk! Nonsense! I tell you, boy, you have nothing to fear from me. You are already worn out with walking, to judge from your looks. Let us find a place to sleep and stay together. Then if you do not like my company in the morning we can part. But if you go on to-night I will go with you."

Finding that there was no chance of getting rid of the fellow without going to a house for protection, which he did not wish to do, Harry said no more, but walked on in silence. At length they came to a place where a hedge ran down to the road.

"Here," said the tramp, "we will find a place to sleep. Let us go up the hedge a piece, where we will not be disturbed."

After walking about a hundred yards from where

they turned aside they came to a place which seemed to suit the tramp, for he said:

"This will do. Pile down."

Harry sat down on the soft grass under the shelter of the hedge, and the tramp stretched himself at full length near by. It was not yet quite dark, and neither felt disposed to sleep at once. It was anxiety which made Harry wakeful, however, for as he had walked all night the night before he was in need of rest. The tramp seemed inclined to talk.

"What is your name, boy?" he asked.

"Harry Lawson."

"Well, I'm Jesse Flynn. Black Flynn, they call me," said the tramp.

His next question startled Harry.

"Have you any money?"

"No, not a cent," said Harry, quickly.

"Where did you come from?"

"From near Ayre."

"When?"

"Last night."

"Where are you going?"

"To Cincinnati."

"What for?"

"To hunt work."

"Work? Where's the use?" said the tramp.

"I must eat," said Harry, "and I can't beg nor steal."

"That's nonsense," said the tramp. "Look at me. I live; I eat like a gentleman. Haven't done a lick of work since the war."

"What do you do then?" asked Harry.

"Live like a nabob. A gentleman of leisure."

"What do you do when you are hungry?"

"I eat."

"How do you get food?"

"Like any other gentleman; I order it. What does your fine gentleman do more? I eat, I sleep, I go where I please, do as I please. The whole country is my estate, my park. I stroll sometimes in one part, sometimes in another. When I am weary I rest, when I am sleepy I sleep. You saw the farmers at work as you came along, toiling and broiling and sweating in the hot sun? Well, they are working in my fields, preparing food for me and others like me, who are wise enough to live without work. Where's the use of work, when you can live as well without it? The farm hand labors for his master, and gets his board and clothes. The farmer labors for the mechanic, the doctor, the merchant, the banker, and gets his board and clothes. They in their turn labor for others and get no more. The fine gentleman spends his money and gets noth-

ing in the end but what he eats, drinks and wears. Then comes the class to which I belong—the most sensible, the most philosophical class of all—who begin where the others leave off after years of labor, and are content with what they eat and wear, without troubling themselves about the source from which it comes. The tramp is the true philosopher, my boy, after all."

Harry, although not prepared to receive the doctrine taught by his strange companion, was nevertheless surprised to hear one of his class use such language. His ideal of a tramp was a low, brutal fellow, with no education, and no thought but to beg or steal, yet here was a man who used good language—as good at least as he was accustomed to hear—who called himself a tramp and who claimed to be a philosopher. He could make no reply, and the tramp went on:

"But this is not all. People who kick and curse the tramps do not know them. They call them vagabonds, and so they are, but they are more. They are the beginning of the new order of things, and the time will come when they will be no longer vagrants, but rulers in this land. Then out of this will grow the equality of all men in all things. The world is just beginning to wake to true philosophy—this part of the world at least. It has been taught in

France for a hundred years. Voltaire taught it; Jussieu taught it; Rousseau taught it; but the strong arm of despotism crushed it out. But here, in this free country, as they call it, where the laws are weak and slow to act, it has taken root, and will grow and gather strength until all the dreams of its early advocates will be realized. I spoke of the easy life of the tramp. I was then only speaking of the present. The tramp has a mission to perform, and when the time comes he will be ready. Perhaps three-fourths of those called tramps are just such easy-going vagabonds as I have described; I am so myself half the time. But I am only waiting; yes, there is a philosophy in this thing which will convulse the world."

"And to what end?" asked Harry, interested in spite of himself.

"To the end that all men may be equal, I tell you," replied the tramp. "The earth was created for the habitation of man, and one man has as good a right to possess it as another. Because I was born after all this land was taken up, is that a reason why those in possession should deny me my share? No; I tell you, the land belongs to all the people, and no man has a right to monopolize any part of it. The wealth of the world is the common property of all its inhabitants, and no set of men have a right to claim it for their peculiar possession. Shall I be

cheated out of my share, and be forced to wear out my life in useless labor because some one happened to be here before me? There's the man who claims to own this field. He holds what he calls a deed for it according to law. Whose law? yours or mine? No, his law. Made by him and men like him who claim a monopoly of God's fair earth. Made to suit themselves without consulting you or me. This law was made before we were born, and this land was all apportioned out years ago. Now what is to become of you, and me, and all who are so unfortunate as to be born poor, as they call it?"

"But did not these men purchase their land, and does not that give them a right to it?" said Harry.

"Suppose they did purchase it?" replied the tramp. "Whose money bought it?"

"Why, their own, I suppose," replied Harry.

"No, sir," said the tramp. "It was your money, my money, everybody's money. Where did it come from? It came from the soil that belongs to the people in common, from the mines which are the property of all mankind. It was wrung from the labor of the poor fools who still acknowledge the right of these usurpers. It is only the same thing in another shape. Let fools work for what is theirs by right; I shall get my share in the easiest way I can, until the time comes to right this thing, and then let them beware."

"But will all people be able to live without work under this new order of things?" asked Harry.

"No," replied the tramp, "but every man will then get the reward of his labor. Besides, nine-tenths of the work now done in the world is done to feed and pamper the rich—to gratify their expensive tastes and satisfy their inordinate ambition. The new arrangement will do away with all that. Each man will labor as his necessities require and no more."

"But would not this stop all improvement?" asked Harry, now thoroughly interested and wishing to hear more of this strange doctrine, of which he had never dreamed before.

"If by improvement you mean the great monopolies that are grinding the life out of the poor, yes," replied the tramp. "But it would not stop the wheels of progress, for then all would have a common interest in the improvement of the country. All the great railroad and telegraph lines, and canals, and manufactories, would be the common property of the people, directed by their representatives, or, as some think they should be, by the government. I tell you, boy, the time is sure to come, and sooner than most people think, too. In the meantime, as I said before, I shall do no labor for these harpies. I can live without it, and if you are wise you will do the same thing. What made you leave home?"

This question was so unexpectedly put that Harry could not answer at once. At length he said:

"I am an orphan, and I did not like my home; so I left it."

"Ran away, eh?"

"Yes."

"What are you going to work at in Cincinnati?"

"I don't know."

"What can you do?"

"I have always worked on a farm."

"Well, they don't farm in Cincinnati."

"I know that," said Harry. "I thought I would like to learn a trade."

"What trade?"

"I don't know."

"Boy, stay with me. I will teach you the best trade in the world—that of independence. While we are waiting for the change, I will show you the world. You shall have nothing to do but roam at your will, stop when and where you please, and laugh at the fools who wear out their lives slaving for their masters, the rich."

"But, certainly, beggary is not independence," said Harry.

"It is not beggary," replied the tramp, fiercely. "I tell you the world owes me a living, and I but take my own."

"But," said Harry, "it seems to me you have forgotten some things. This kind of life might do very well in this pleasant weather. But in the winter?"

"Take a lesson from the birds, my boy," said the tramp. "Turn your back on the winter and go south. Or, if you wish, you can do as many others do. Go to the station houses or the jails."

"The jails!"

"Yes, why not? I've known a man spend the winter in jail, and live like a lord, while these same farmers were toiling in the ice and snow to feed those who had learned to do without work—though I confess that the jail is little to my taste, and I try to avoid it. I love my liberty at all times. But, if one wishes, it is very simple. The cold weather comes on and it is too disagreeable to travel. Well, pick up any little article, not too valuable, get caught at it, and your winter lodgings are ready provided for you—paid for by the country."

"But suppose you get sick?" said Harry.

"Well," said the tramp, "let us suppose that you go to work as you intend, and you get sick. What then? Will you be any better off than I am? Not a bit. We both go to the hospital, or the poor-house. It amounts to the same thing in the end. Come, boy, will you go with me and lead the free

and easy life of a tramp, or will you continue to toil that others may reap the fruits of your labors?"

"Why do you wish me to go with you?" asked Harry.

"I will tell you," said the tramp. "You are young and handsome, and the women will give you always the best in the house, if you play your cards well. I am strong and know the country, and can lead you where we will fare the best, so that you see we will each help the other. Is that plain enough? Come, what do you say?"

Harry scarcely knew what to answer. He feared to speak his mind, for he was alone with one whom he knew to be a bold, desperate man, a thief by his own confession, and it might be worse. So he said:

"Let me study on it until morning and I will tell you. I am sleepy now."

"All right," said the tramp. "Go to sleep, but make up your mind in the morning. I have taken a fancy to you, and do not care to part with you."

Harry lay down and pretended to sleep, but his anxiety was too great to permit him to close his eyes. His thoughts were too intently bent upon getting away from his dangerous companion to give much attention to analyzing the sophistry he had just heard.

But, while he is waiting for his companion to fall

asleep, the reader will pardon me if I offend his intelligence by replying to some of it, for there are many otherwise sensible men who pretend to believe this doctrine.

CHAPTER IV.

COMMUNISM.

THE doctrines advanced by our tramp are held by two distinct classes of persons. To the tramping fraternity there is one all-sufficient answer. If all things were to be equalized to-day, in less than a twelve-month these gentry would be back at their old occupation, eating the substance of better men. The other class, being honest in their belief, however mistaken in their conclusions, merit, perhaps, a more extended reply.

The world has been rushing on over the railroad of progress like a train drawn by a mighty engine. There has been no pause or stay for those who have been so unfortunate as to be too late for the train, and all their envy of the more fortunate will not reverse the engine or bring it back to them; yet that is what many hope to do. The world has gone off and left them, and they think it should pause until they catch up. They attribute all their grievances to the fortunate achievements of others rather

than to their own misfortunes—I will not say faults, for, in very many cases, to do them justice, it is no fault of theirs.

The race, according to these persons, has been unfair. We will not count this time, and will try it again. The time-piece of human progress must be regulated. We will lengthen the pendulum, and set back the hands. We will give the world a few thousand backward revolutions, just to equalize things. Communism is the power that is to accomplish this. This is the Archimidean force which is to move the world, and only lacks the fulcrum upon which to rest the lever.

Well, let us go back. Let us throw all things together, and shake them up, and make an equal distribution. Let us close our eyes to the reign of terror that must ensue before this is done. Let us bury our dead from our sight, and wipe up the blood, and sweep up the ashes. Let us close our ears to the wail of tortured innocence and the brutal laugh of rapine and sensuality. Let us teach ourselves to gaze unmoved upon ruined homes and depopulated cities; upon a land torn with dissensions, and sacked by pillage; upon a government dismembered and prostrate beneath the heel of anarchy; upon a country shunned by the nations of the world and execrated by its own citizens; upon the destruction of law and

order and the rule of that worst of despotisms, the despotism of the mob. Have you done it? Well, now we are ready to begin our equalization. We are now where society began thousands of years ago. What will you have?

"We want the land, machinery, railroads, telegraphs, canals, to be made the common property of the whole people, through the government; to abolish the wages system and substitute in its stead co-operative production, with a just distribution of its rewards. Society shall hold all things in common. Factories, railroads, banks, insurance, shops, markets —all will be run for the benefit of the people, as the post-office is now. No man shall have a monopoly of these things. Houses and lands all shall be regulated by the people through the government." (See interview in New York *Herald.*) This, I believe, embraces the general idea of the doctrine of communism as taught in the United States. It is laughed at and treated lightly by the majority of the intelligent people of our country. Even the newspapers, those great educators of the people, scarcely deign to do more than mention the dangerous doctrines of these agitators. Yet, when we remember that in countries where they had less hope of success than in ours they succeeded in overthrowing the established order of things, and in deluging the land in

blood, is it wise to thus trifle with the perpetuity of our institutions? The tiger of the Indian jungle is more merciful than this monster of the commune. There is but one hope for a country when the virus of this dogma has once poisoned its veins, and that is in the education of the people—not through the schools, for the process is too slow; but through that speedier and more effective means, the press. Communism in all its branches dreads this calcium light, which has the power to turn its counterfeit gold into its original brass, and its boasted jewels into paste. Let the press throw its light upon the scene, and show its specious pretences in their true colors. Not one in ten of those who profess to believe this doctrine would adhere to it could they be brought to clearly see the end. But let the storm once break upon the country, and the maddening passions of anarchy will sweep the land with the besom of destruction.

But to return to this doctrine as taught by our American communists. The predominant idea appears to be that all things shall be in common, regulated through the government. But how is this government to be supported? By taxation. But there is nothing to tax. A. owns nothing; B. owns nothing, and experience has taught us that none are patriotic enough to pay what they can avoid. Will not

your government find itself in a dilemma? There is no responsible party but the government. Shall it assess its own property, and pay itself the tax for its support?

"But the government owns all the land, railroads, shops, markets, factories and everything. They will support it. There will be no need of taxes."

"Indeed! And who is to patronize the railroads, shops, etc.?"

"The people, of course!"

"Where will they get their money?"

"From the government."

"And where will the government get its money?"

"From the people."

"Oh, yes! I see. A kind of boomerang arrangement. But if no one has any private property no one will have any money."

"But each man will be allowed to accumulate a certain amount of property."

"Thank you! For the especial purpose of paying the government, I suppose. But how much?"

"Oh, the law will regulate that."

"But when this is all gone, as it will soon be in hundreds of cases, what then? Divide again?"

"Oh, no; the government will see to that?"

"But, my dear sir, do you not see that this is but jumping from the frying-pan into the fire? To avoid

a few individual monopolies, you give yourself, body and soul, into the hands of the greatest monopoly of which the mind of man ever conceived. What assurance have you that you can direct this government after you have instituted it? Do you not complain now that you have no voice in the administration of affairs? Well, what hope have you of doing better under the new order of things, unless, indeed, you intend to kill off all those who differ from you in opinion? You can not now agree among yourselves, except in the matter of destruction. For building up again you have as many plans as you have individuals, and the more adherents you gain the more plans you will have. How will you decide the matter? By majorities? You are not willing to submit to that arbitration now. Will you be then? Your government, at best, could be no more than a gigantic haberdasher's shop, without power, without dignity, without stability, and would be but the stepping-stone to a despotism worse than that of Turkey."

I hope that those of my readers who have been able to see at once the absurdity of this doctrine will pardon me for this, to you, unnecessary chapter. It is not written for you, and you may as well skip it. But there are more than you think who are misled by the specious sophistry of these agitators, and to them this is especially addressed.

Under the new order of things which these men would inaugurate no man would labor more than was absolutely necessary for a mere support, for he would labor without hope. Even were it possible to accumulate money or property, he would at once become a bloated monopolist, and would be compelled to disgorge and divide with his less fortunate or more indolent neighbors. The country would be completely at the mercy of every invader, for there would be no means of defense. Even the king of the Cannibal Islands, being more civilized and consequently more powerful than we, might, if he took it into his head to equalize things by annexing the United States, "make a just distribution of rewards" by handing us all over to his royal cooks.

"But every citizen would be willing to fight for his country."

"My dear sir, he would have no country. He would have no interest anywhere. The people having no ambition, no hope of advancement, would become as indolent as the Hottentots of Africa. It is the hope of accumulating property that drives the wheels of progress. There is one grand old song, the sweetest in our language, which you must blot from the memory of the people before you begin your equalization: 'Home, Sweet Home.' It was this hope that, standing at the prow of the Mayflower while she

battled with the Atlantic waves, pointed toward the promised land. It was this that gave the western pioneer strength and courage to combat wild animals and wilder Indians, and his ringing ax kept time to the music of that sweet song as progress beat her conquering march across the continent from ocean to ocean—the hope of establishing for themselves homes that they could call their own—not to be the property of a commune, held as a part of the common property of all mankind, but absolutely their own, where they could live and love and rear their children, and transmit to them the just rewards of a life of labor and economy. And what is offered as a substitute for these desecrated homes? A dwelling-place regulated by law—a law subject to the caprice of the rabble. A home in which all tastes are made subservient to the will of a mob. What would such a home be to an intelligent, thinking man or woman? Have not the paupers better homes to-day in the poor-houses? Better in that they have hopes of still advancing to better things, whereas the pauper of the commune has no power to change his condition."

But this chapter has already gone beyond the limits I intended, and I will drop the subject for the present.

There is, however, another thing that you will have to suppress before you inaugurate your commune, and that is intelligence. Intelligence is ambitious,

and ambition accumulates property. Allow no man to be wiser than another, lest he repine at his lot, and instead of rendering him happy you force him to lead a life of wretchedness. First contrive some plan to regulate all mankind by your own standard of intellect, and you may hope to succeed. I doubt it even then; for in a year there would be strife among you, as there was among the herdsmen of old, and you would be ready to say, as Abraham said to Lot, "Separate thyself from me, I pray thee. If thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right; or if thou depart to the right hand, then I will go to the left."

Then the history of the world would be re-enacted, with all the disadvantages of four thousand years of retrogradation.

CHAPTER V.

THE MURDER.

Harry lay for more than an hour perfectly still before he ventured to rise upon his elbow and look about him. The night was dark, yet he could distinguish the outline of a wood that appeared to border the road at some distance, and he thought that he might escape by concealing himself there.

"I will try it," thought he. "I can be no worse off if I fail."

He rose to his feet, and moving slowly and cautiously away, he reached the road without waking the tramp, and with a beating heart walked rapidly toward the wood. Here he paused to listen. All was still.

"I will walk on," he said to himself, "and before morning will be so far in advance that he can not overtake me."

He had almost passed through the wood when he heard the sound of approaching footsteps coming from the opposite direction. His adventure with the

tramp had made him suspicious, and he quickly hid himself by the side of the road to wait until the strangers had passed. When they came opposite his hiding-place he saw by the faint light that there were two of them, and could hear them conversing in low tones. Instead of passing on as he hoped, they paused and sat down within a few feet of him. He suppressed his breathing as much as possible, lest it should betray his presence, and listened eagerly.

"How long before he'll be here, d'ye think?" said one in a voice that made Harry start, it was so deep and peculiar in its tones.

"Vell, not long now, I tink; half hour," was the reply.

"Sure he's got the money with him?"

"I saw him draw it from ze bank."

"Did you see where he put it?"

"In ze pocket of ze breast. He vas vary much careful, but I see him all ze same."

"It is a good pile of money; 'leven hundred and fifty dollars."

"Mon Dieu, oui!"

"Well, we must make sure work of it. You stop the horse and I'll clap the pistol in his face, and tell him to shell out."

"Don't kill him. Sacre! I don't like ze blood. It's too much, vat you call him, reesk, eh?"

"Well, I won't hurt the old chap if he's reasonable, and comes down with the stamps; but I'm goin' to have that money, murder or no murder. But let's get furder up the road, where the trees are thicker."

They passed on, and as soon as they were far enough away to permit him to leave his concealment without detection, Harry stole on his way, keeping in the deeper shadows of the trees until he was out of hearing of the men, and then ran with all his might until he was out of breath. Then he paused to think. Here were two rascals who intended to commit robbery, perhaps murder. The man they expected to rob was doubtless approaching on that road. Could he not meet him and warn him of his danger? He would try. So he continued at a rapid pace, pausing now and then to listen for the sound of approaching wheels. Presently he reached a place where the road forked. Here was a dilemma. He stopped to listen. Far up the left-hand road he heard the sound of wheels.

"That must be the man," he said to himself, and ran on.

For some little time he heard the sound whenever he stopped, but at last all was still. Could he have been mistaken? He now regretted that he had not waited at the forks of the road until the man came along. This would have been the sensible plan, and

he was just about to turn back, hoping to be yet in time to meet the man should he come by the other way, when he again heard the sound of wheels, this time on his right, and coming down a lane from a house which he could just discover through the gloom. The carriage, for such it was, turned into the road, and Harry called to the man who was its only occupant.

"Well, what do you want?" said the man.

The boy ran to the side of the vehicle and in broken and hurried words told his story.

"Are you the man they want to rob?" he asked.

"No, I am a physician, and have just visited a sick man at that house. Let me think. Did the robbers describe this man they were waiting for?"

"No; only they spoke of him as an old man," said Harry.

"He must be coming from Calusa," said the doctor. "That is on the other road. Jump in. We may be in time yet."

Harry climbed in beside the doctor, who urged his horse rapidly on toward the forks of the road. Not a word was spoken until they reached this place, when the doctor checked his horse and said:

"Listen!"

"I hear the sound of wheels," said Harry.

"Which way?" asked the doctor.

"The way I came," replied Harry.

"Ah, I hear it now," said the doctor. "He has passed, and is some distance ahead of us. I fear we are too late, but we may yet frighten the scoundrels off. Ho, there!" he shouted at the top of his voice, and, lashing his horse to its utmost speed, he dashed after the receding vehicle. They had just approached the wood near enough to perceive its outline through the darkness, when they were startled by a loud cry, followed, or rather accompanied, by the report of a pistol. The doctor shouted again, and dashed on. They had now reached the center of the wood, when the doctor's horse shied from the middle of the road, and turned half round.

"Hold on," cried he. "There's something here. Hold the reins, my boy." And he sprang from the carriage. As soon as the sound of their wheels ceased they heard the rattle of some vehicle dashing up the road at a fearful rate.

"He has escaped, sir," said Harry. "Don't you hear his carriage?"

"That is his carriage, no doubt, my boy," said the doctor. "But the man lies here."

"Oh, sir!" cried the boy, "is he dead? Have they killed him?"

"I don't know. I fear so," replied the doctor. "He is insensible. I have a lantern under the carriage seat. We will soon know."

The doctor took a small lantern from under the seat, and lighting it, approached the fallen man, whom Harry could now see lying on his face in the road. The doctor turned him over and held the lantern to his face. Harry looked, and turned away sick with horror. The man was dead—shot through the brain. His face was blackened by the powder from the pistol, and his gray hair was dabbled in his blood.

"Yes, he is dead," said the doctor. "Help me to put him in the carriage. I know him. It is Enoch Cartwright, who lived at the next house. He has been murdered on his own farm."

As the doctor stepped to the horse's head to turn him back into the road, the light of the lantern fell upon the trees, and Harry saw, peering from the darkness, a face that he recognized in a moment. It was Black Flynn.

"Oh, sir, there's a man," he cried.

"Where?" said the doctor, starting forward, but the face had disappeared, and they could hear the sound of some one running rapidly away through the underbrush.

"That's one of the scoundrels, no doubt," said the doctor, "but it is useless to pursue him now. Let us get the body into the carriage."

The old man was of slight build, so it was no great task, and then they proceeded toward the house be-

fore mentioned, Harry walking ahead and carrying the lantern, and the doctor leading the horse. When they came opposite the house they found the old man's carriage overturned against the fence, and the horse running wildly up and down the road. The noise had aroused the people at the house, and lights were seen moving about, and they heard the sound of opening and shutting doors.

It is needless to pause here to attempt to describe the scene of grief and terror when the bloody corpse of the old farmer was borne into his home.

At the coroner's inquest, the next day, it was ascertained that the old man had been to town to draw money from the bank to make a payment on some land he had recently purchased. Something, it was not known what, had detained him until after night. Harry told the story of his night's adventure, and it was supposed that one or both of the tramps had been dogging the old man, and ascertained by some means the time at which he might be expected at the spot where he met his death. Before the inquest was over word was brought in that a tramp had been arrested on suspicion. He was brought into the room, and Harry recognized Black Flynn. The boy related to the coroner the history of his connection with the tramp, and stated that he had left him asleep under the

hedge but a few minutes before his meeting with the men who committed the murder. Flynn stated that he had been aroused by the cry and the shot, and had naturally run down to the road to see what was the matter, and had discovered the doctor and Harry by the side of the murdered man. That was all he knew about it. This, with Harry's evidence, satisfied the coroner, and he was released, and left the room. Harry hoped that he had seen the last of him, but he was mistaken, as those will find who pursue this narrative

After the inquest Harry thought he would be allowed to depart, but was informed that it would be necessary to remain in the neighborhood to give further evidence in case the murderers were arrested.

"But I have no place to stay," said the boy. "I have no money, and I fear I can not get work here now."

"Still, it is very necessary for you to remain," said the coroner. "The officers and citizens are already scouring the country in all directions, and the murderers will probably be arrested before night. We will need you in that case to identify them."

"I don't think I could do that, sir," answered Harry. "It was so dark that I could see nothing but the outlines of their forms in the shadows."

"Well, you could probably tell something about

them; their size, for instance; or you might recognize their voices."

Harry started. He remembered now the peculiar tones of that voice, and he said, on the impulse of that thought:

"Yes, sir; I would know one of their voices, at least."

"So you see, my boy," replied the coroner, "it is very important to detain you as a witness."

"Yes, sir," he replied, "but I have no place to stay."

The doctor, who had been an attentive listener to this conversation, now came forward.

"I will take the boy home with me, Mr. James," said he. "He can remain at my house for a day or two, at least. And if you are willing to work," he continued, turning to Harry, "I can give you something to do until the thing is settled."

"Thank you, sir," said the boy. "I am perfectly willing to work for my board while I am compelled to remain."

"Very well. What is your name?"

"Harry Lawson, sir."

"Well, Harry, come with me, and I will see what I can do for you."

Harry accompanied Dr. Blair to his home, which was in the edge of a small village a few miles beyond

where they first met. When he ascertained that the boy had eaten nothing since the evening before, and that he had not slept for two nights, he first gave him a hearty dinner, and then, showing him the room he was to occupy, ordered him to bed. Harry demurred at first but yielded at last, and was soon sound asleep.

CHAPTER VI.

CAPTURE OF THE TRAMPS.

On the morning following the night of the murder, two men crept from under a haystack which stood in a small meadow about three miles from the scene of the tragedy. These were Sandy Hines and Toney Bazin. The place of their concealment was admirably adapted to that purpose. The meadow was far from any house, surrounded on the east, north and west by woods, and on the south by a large corn field. To this place they had fled as soon as the deed was committed. It had not been the intention of the tramp to kill the old man, but, hearing the approach of the doctor's carriage, and meeting more resistance than he expected, for the old man fought hard for his money, he had shot his victim, dragged him from the carriage and tore the pocket-book from his breast pocket, where his companion had informed him he had seen it placed when the money was drawn from the bank. The two robbers then sprang into the woods, and, by the time Dr. Blair and

Harry came on the scene they were beyond sight and hearing.

After crawling from their hiding-place they sat down to count the money. Sandy did this, while the Frenchman looked over his shoulder.

"One, two, three," counted Sandy, as he turned over the bills; "four, five, six, seven ——"

The Frenchman's eyes sparkled like fire, and his hands trembled as he half reached toward the notes.

"Eight, nine, ten, 'leven and a fifty," counted Sandy. "There it is. 'Leven hundred-dollar bills and a fifty."

The Frenchman reached out his hand without a word. Sandy moved his farther away.

"No," he said, "we can't divide it now. They're after us hot, somewhere, not far off, you bet, and we'll have to hide it till this thing blows over a little. That's what I stopped here for. If we try to git away now, we'll be taken, sure, for they're watchin' all the roads, and them infernal telegraphs will head us off. And if we're cotched and we've got this money, don't you see it will stretch our necks? But if they don't find anything on us, what can they do? Nobody saw us but the old man, and he's too dead to skin. No, we're agoin' to plant this money somewhere, where we can find it agin', and then we'll lay 'round here till they give the thing up, then we'll dig it up and skip out."

"Vell, I don't know," said Toney. "You gifs me my moneys, and I takes care of him."

"It can't be did," said Sandy, decidedly. "I'm not agoin' to risk my neck with lettin' you be took with any of this money. For don't you see, they'll want to know who's got the other half, and I won't take no chances. We've got to stick together in this thing. D'ye see?"

The Frenchman was evidently dissatisfied, but he said nothing, and the two left the meadow and entered the woods. No sooner had they disappeared than a man rose from behind a fence near by, and stole silently after them. It was Black Flynn. The robbers hunted some time before they found a spot which appeared to suit their purpose. At last they paused at the foot of a large oak which grew in a dense thicket. While they were busily engaged in digging a hole and hiding the money, Flynn crawled cautiously and silently as a serpent through the bushes until he had reached a spot from which he could watch their actions. When the money was hidden and the grass and leaves replaced above the spot to give all things a natural appearance, Sandy and Toney arose and departed. Flynn lay still until the sound of their footsteps had died away in the distance, and then he stole to the root of the tree, unearthed the treasure, replaced the dirt and the grass

and leaves, and walked off in the opposite direction. At the distance of about a mile from this place, he, in his turn, hid the money, marking the spot in such a way as to know it again, and then proceeded boldly toward the scene of the murder.

In an hour after he was arrested, but was released again, as we have already seen.

Sandy and the Frenchman returned to their hiding place, all unconscious that their blood-bought prize had disappeared. Here they remained until about the middle of the afternoon, when hunger drove them forth in search of food. This was close at hand. The corn field before mentioned was full of roasting ears, that luxury which, in its season, is ever ready and ever welcome to the hungry tramp. Having listened attentively a moment to assure themselves that no one was near them, they carried about a dozen of these into the woods and built a fire. This they allowed to burn into a bed of coals, and then, without removing the husks, they covered the corn up in the embers. In about half an hour their supper was ready, and they dispatched it with the eagerness of men always in a chronic state of hunger; for the tramp lives to eat, while others eat to live. His tastes are not always gratified, it is true, but there is no greater glutton, naturally, than your professional tramp.

Scarcely had they finished eating, however, when they heard the barking of a dog, and then a loud shout in the direction of their former place of concealment. They sprang to their feet and listened. They heard an answering call to the left of them, and then shouts and loud talking to their rear. They were surrounded.

"D—n them," said Sandy, springing upon a log and looking hurriedly about him, "they have tracked us with dogs. Into the corn field, Toney, quick! If we can dodge them till night we'll give them the slip yet."

If the tramps had been wise they would not have run away. The chances of their capture were almost certain, and flight would be one of the surest evidences of their guilt; whereas, should they allow themselves to be quietly taken, the worst that could be definitely charged to them would be stealing the corn. But guilt is timid as a hare, and sometimes equally as foolish. So, obeying the first promptings of a guilty conscience, they sprang into the corn field and began to make their way through it. The tall stalks hid them from view, but the ground was soft and betrayed their steps. The tramps saw this at a glance, but it was now too late; so they ran on. Presently they heard a shout at the spot they had just left. Their pursuers had found the fire.

"To the corn field," cried a voice. "They will take to the corn field!"

The Frenchman turned pale, and Sandy set his teeth hard.

"Quick," he said. "Let's make to the south. Maybe they're not on that side yet."

Then again a voice came, striking terror to their hearts, "They're in the corn field. Here's where they went in. Look out! Close up around the corn field."

And now began an exciting chase. The fugitives heard the sound of their pursuers crashing through the corn on every side of them, and were obliged to dodge about and double on their tracks like hunted rabbits. They had this advantage, however, they ran silently and avoided shaking the corn, while their pursuers, taking no pains to conceal their movements, made a great deal of noise, and thus enabled their prey to elude them; besides, they frequently mistook each other for the game they were hunting, and were thus delayed in their pursuit. "Here they go! here they go!" would be shouted every few minutes, as the tramps were discovered down the long rows of corn, but before they could be reached they had disappeared again. Oh! it was a gallant race. Fifty infuriated men, maddened by the excitement of the chase, cruel and indefatigable as blood-hounds, re-

morselessly pursuing their human prey, while the flying tramps, pale with terror, their breasts heaving with exertion, and great drops of sweat rolling down their pallid cheeks, ran for their lives. To an uninterested spectator the whole scene would have borne such an appearance of fiendish cruelty that his sympathies would have gone out to the terror-stricken fugitives, and he would almost have prayed for their escape. But such deeds of brutality had been committed, time and again, by the tramps, that now, they had culminated in a cold-blooded, unprovoked murder, was it any wonder that the self-constituted avengers of these crimes should be as remorseless as death in their pursuit of the villains?

After what appeared to the frightened men as an age of misery they came to a fence. Beyond this was a large open field. To cross this was their only chance, for to retrace their steps, or to remain where they were, was certain capture.

"Now, Toney," panted Sandy, as he climbed the fence, "we 'd better separate."

"No, we keeps together this time, too," said the Frenchman.

"Very well, then; come on!" was the reply, as he sprang into the field. "If you ever ran, now's your time."

Toney followed close at his heels. Beyond the

open field was another corn field. For this they ran. They had reached the middle of the open space they were crossing when they heard again the loud shouts of their pursuers.

"There they go! There they go! Across the stubble field!"

Bang! Bang! went a revolver, but at too great a distance to do any hurt.

"Keep along the fence! Head them off! They're making for the other corn field!" were cries which reached the ears of the terrified tramps.

Then they heard the clatter of horses' feet.

"Throw down the fence! Let me into the field!" cried a voice.

The sound of falling rails was heard, and the thunder of hoofs. The tramps looked back over their shoulders as they ran, and their hearts sank with despair. A man was riding furiously toward them, surrounded by a cloud of dust, which trailed behind him like the smoke from a running locomotive. He gained at every stride, and as he came near, Sandy stopped and drew a revolver. His first impulse was to fire, but on second thought he saw that it would be madness. Even if he killed this man his capture was certain, and then conviction would surely follow, if not immediate execution at the nearest tree. The man saw the pistol, and, presenting his own, shouted as he rode toward them:

"Drop your pistols and throw up your hands, or I will shoot you!"

The tramps obeyed, and the man kept them covered with his pistol until several of his companions came up, when the fugitives were seized and bound.

"What does all this mean?" asked Sandy, with a great assumption of indignation.

"You'll find out pretty quick what it means," said one.

"To the woods with them; string them up!" cried another.

"Yes, that's the talk. Let's make short work of it. They'll never kill another man," was answered from the crowd.

"No," said the man who had first overtaken them; don't let us be hasty. We've got no positive evidence yet. We will take them to jail."

This cooler counsel prevailed, for in fact they had no direct evidence against them. All was yet suspicion, although this was rendered almost a certainty to the minds of their captors by their attempt to escape.

"Search them!" cried one.

This was done. A dozen ready hands soon performed the work, but nothing was found to criminate them. There were no visible signs of blood on their clothing, and nothing to prove that they were the parties guilty of the murder.

The men appeared disappointed. Sandy observed this, and it gave him courage.

"Well, can't you tell a feller what all this means?" he said.

"You'll find that out when you get to Calusa," was the reply.

"You've no right to arrest a man in this way. Where's your warrant?"

"Oh, that's all right. There's one in the crowd somewhere. Come on, men; let's be off with them. It'll soon be night."

So the tramps were captured, and that night lodged in the jail at Calusa.

CHAPTER VII.

THE JUSTICE'S COURT.

HARRY was so worn out with his unusual exertions and loss of sleep, that he did not awake until after daylight the next morning, and not even then, until the doctor came to call him to breakfast.

"Well, Harry," said Dr. Blair, after the meal was over, "you have had a good rest, and, I suppose, are ready for business this morning."

"Yes, sir," replied the boy, thinking the doctor referred to some work that he was to do.

"Have you any other clothing in that bundle you have with you?"

"Yes, sir; that is my Sunday suit."

"Put it on, then, for we must go to the trial."

"The trial, sir," exclaimed Harry. "Have they caught the murderers?"

"They have caught two men who may turn out to be the right ones. There is no evidence, as yet, however, except that they had been seen lurking about the neighborhood for several days, and one of them

was seen in Calusa on the day preceding the murder. The teller of the bank where the old man drew the money noticed a man who looked like a tramp, hanging about the door while the old man was getting his money, and thinks he can recognize him again. The strongest evidence, so far, however, appears to be the desperate efforts which they made to escape capture when they were found in the woods. The trial is to take place before the justice at Calusa. It is probable that you can throw some light upon the affair. What do you think?"

"I think," said Harry, "that I could recognize the voice of one of them. It was a peculiar voice, and made a deep impression on my mind at the time. I am not certain, though, sir."

"Well, it is worth a trial," said Dr. Blair. "Let us go."

The town of Calusa was situated about five miles from the little village near which the doctor lived. On arriving at the town they found a great crowd about the justice's office. Everybody appeared to be excited, and there was much loud talk and some threats of lynching the prisoners. The people had already condemned them in their own minds, and it would have taken little to turn that excited assembly into a mob.

This impulsive vehemence appears to be almost

characteristic of our western people. Quick in impulse, they decide in their own minds the guilt or innocence of the accused persons, and, too frequently, arrogate to themselves the prerogatives of judge, jury and executioner.

Yet I have known men, convicted and sentenced for the crime of murder, who were pardoned in less than a year at the earnest petition of the very men whom nothing but the vigilance and courage of the officers of the law prevented from summarily executing them on their first arrest for the crime; and that, too, before they had even a preliminary examination. I have seen these same men walk free upon the streets, and clasp in friendly greeting the hands of the very men before whom they trembled when nothing intervened between the self-constituted avenger and his victim but the revolvers of the sheriff and his assistants. Truly, the passions of man are hard to understand.

Dr. Blair and Harry passed through the crowd and entered the room where the trial was to be held, and where the constables had the prisoners in charge. These it is unneccessary to describe, as the reader has already formed their acquaintance.

The justice had just begun the examination when Dr. Blair and Harry entered.

"What is your name?" he asked of the larger of the two prisoners.

"Sanford Hines; called Sandy for short," answered the prisoner, with an insolent air, for the fact that there appeared to be but little evidence against them had given them courage, and both appeared defiant.

Harry started, and seized the doctor by the arm when he heard this man speak.

"You recognize the voice?" whispered the doctor.

"I do," answered Harry, in the same tone. "If the other talks in broken English, they are certainly the men who committed the crime."

"What is your occupation?" asked the justice.

"I am an iron puddler."

"Where did you work last?"

"At Pittsburg."

"When?"

"Three years ago."

"What have you been doing since?"

"Traveling."

"Tramping, you mean."

"Well, it's all the same."

A few more questions of the same nature were asked, and then the justice turned to the other man:

"What is your name?" he asked.

"Toney Bazin," was the reply.

"What do you follow?"

"I haf no trade, sair."

Dr. Blair looked at Harry. The latter nodded.

"How do you earn your living?" continued the justice.

"I vorks zometimes at ze one ting, zometimes at ze ozer."

"Sanford Hines and Toney Bazin," said the justice, "you are charged with the murder and robbery of one Enoch Cartwright, a farmer of this township, on the night of July 19th, of this year. What have you to say to the charge? Are you guilty or not guilty?"

"Not guilty," said Sandy.

"Not guilty, sair," said the Frenchman.

The witnesses for the prosecution were then called. Harry told his story in a straightforward way, which carried with it a conviction of its truth. When the prisoners heard for the first time that their conversation had been overheard, they looked at each other and changed countenance. Sandy glanced hurriedly toward the door. Harry's eyes followed the look, and there, pressing among the crowd, but half a head above them, stood Black Flynn. The boy whispered to the doctor, who in turn held a hurried conversation with the justice in a low tone, but when they again glanced in that direction the man was gone.

"He should have been held when he was first ar-

rested," said the doctor. "His presence here proves that he is in some way connected with these men."

Harry was asked if he recognized the prisoners.

"Only by their voices," was the answer.

"Can you describe those voices?" asked the justice.

"One was a very deep, hoarse voice," said Harry, "and the other was that of a Frenchman, or some one who talked broken English."

Sandy turned pale, and grasped the back of his chair, as if he would crush the wood with his herculean hand, and the Frenchman set his teeth together with a vicious snap.

"Were the voices like those of these men?" asked the justice.

"They were the same voices, I am confident," said Harry.

The hopeless look that came, for a moment, into the faces of the two men, was pitiable to see. As soon, however, as they saw the eyes of the crowd turned toward them, they tried to shake off their terror, and again assumed a look of dogged insolence. The murmurs about the door grew louder, and the constable had to call for order before the trial could proceed. The bank teller now gave his evidence. He thought that he recognized in the Frenchman the man whom he saw hanging about the bank when the old man drew his money, but was not quite certain.

The keeper of a hotel in the suburbs of the town testified that Mr. Cartwright stopped at his house about sundown, and stated that he was waiting for a man with whom he had some business. That, while the deceased sat in the room, a man came to the door and looked in. He did not see him fairly, but thought that the man who called himself Toney Bazin was the person. He might, however, be mistaken. Soon after, the gentleman for whom Mr. Cartwright had been waiting came in, and they were in close conversation until it was quite late.

This man came forward voluntarily and stated that his business with Mr. Cartwright was with reference to the purchase of some property which the latter owned in the town. He said that when they parted the deceased had mentioned that he did not like to ride home alone in the night, as he had a considerable amount of money with him.

The toll-gate keeper stated that he was still up when Mr. Cartwright passed through the gate. It was quite late—well on toward midnight. He remembered that a man had passed through on foot, perhaps an hour before the deceased, but he did not notice him. Could not say whether it was one of the prisoners.

Dr. Blair gave his evidence as to the finding of the body, corroborating, in part, Harry's story. The ev-

idence before the coroner's jury was also introduced, but it added little to that now given.

The prisoners were then asked what they had to say in their defense. They still asserted their innocence, and said that, if time and opportunity were given them, they would be able to prove an alibi. As they made no effort in this direction, however, although every opportunity was offered them, the justice remanded them to jail, to await the action of the grand jury, and the court adjourned.

The confusion outside increased, and cries of "Bring ropes! Let's string them up!" were heard.

The prisoners by this time had lost all their bravado, and trembled with fear. The justice, however, whispered a few words to the constables, and then pressed his way through the crowd in the house, and began to talk to the mob outside. He counseled prudence and order; told them that the men were committed to jail; that the grand jury would meet shortly, and that, no doubt, a true bill would be found against the murderers, and they would be held for trial at the next term of court. He assured them that justice would be done, and begged them, in the name of law and order and decency, to disperse.

In the meantime the constables had taken the prisoners away by another door, opening into an adjoining apartment, and before the mob were aware of the

state of the case, the tramps were safe in jail, though still pale and trembling from the effects of their fright.

It was now more than ever necessary that Harry should remain as a witness, and Dr. Blair entered into bond for his appearaece when wanted, and then went home, taking Harry with him.

CHAPTER VIII.

A PLOT.

MONTHS passed on. The grand jury found a true bill against the two men for murder in the first degree, and their trial was to come on in June. Meantime Harry had become a valued and honored inmate of the doctor's home. His duties consisted in taking care of the doctor's horses and performing chores about the house. He was active and intelligent, and the more the doctor saw of him the better he liked him. Dr. Blair's family consisted of his wife and a daughter, a year younger than Harry.

Mrs. Blair treated Harry like a son, and her daughter treated him like a brother. One day, toward the last of May, Dr. Blair said to Harry:

"In two weeks the trial comes on. Have you thought of what you will do when it is over?"

"I have not," replied the boy.

"I suppose," continued the doctor, "that you will be for tramping again?"

"I shall never be a tramp," replied Harry. "If

you can not give me employment after the trial I shall seek for it elsewhere, and find it as soon as possible."

"Would you like to remain here?"

"Above all things, if you can give me work."

"I have been thinking, Harry," said Dr. Blair, "that you are capable of better things than you have been doing."

"Do not think me vain, sir," replied the boy, "when I say that I have felt so myself, and I intend in time to attempt better things."

"Why not now, Harry?"

"Show me the chance," answered the boy, "and all that one of my age and limited attainments can do, I will do."

"What have you thought of—a profession?"

"Perhaps so, in time, sir; but now all I desire is some place to earn my living, while I watch for the opportunity to better my condition."

"Watching will not do it, my boy," said the doctor. "It is action that wins success."

"Oh! sir; you are so kind, so wise, show me how to act."

"That I will, my boy, I will not hesitate to tell you that I believe in your earnestness of purpose in this thing. I like you. I have watched you closely since you have been with me, and I think you have in you

that which, properly developed, will make you a useful member of society. If you desire to stay with me for the present, you can do so. I will give you a chance to earn your living, since you have a very proper pride in that direction. In the meantime you can have access to my library. Read, my boy, read and think. You need not read medicine. You are not prepared for that yet, even though you should choose to follow my profession. But read history; read biography; read the works of the great thinkers, and you will find that your inclination and talent will soon shape your course for you. In September our academy opens again; you shall attend school, and if you are what I think you, Harry, I will find that my help has not been thrown away."

"Oh, sir," cried Harry, "how can I thank you? It has been the dream of my life to have such a chance. When I lived with Mr. Shannon he sent me to school three months in the year. I have no doubt that it was all he could do. It was all that I could expect. But the time was so short, and I was always looking forward with dread to the time when school would close. Mr. Shannon had no books, and out of school it was nothing but drudge and drudge from morning till night, with no chance of learning."

"You are wrong, my boy," said Dr. Blair. "Education is not all contained in books. Even in drudg-

ing, as you call it, there are many opportunities of improving the mind; and the intelligent, thinking person will soon rise above drudgery. Remember, boy, that there is no disgrace in any kind of honest labor. The disgrace is in neglecting opportunities to fit yourself for a higher and more useful life. There are always enough of those who will not or can not, do better, to fill the station of 'drudges,' as you call them. Do you fit yourself for something else."

"I will do so," said Harry, his heart swelling and his eyes flashing. "Only give me a chance."

"I will give you the start, boy; you must make your own chances," said the doctor.

So it was settled. Harry was to remain an inmate of Dr. Blair's family, paying for his board, as he had been doing, by his labor, and to attend school in the village. The doctor informed his wife and daughter of this arrangement. Mrs. Blair spoke kindly and encouragingly to the boy, and little Carrie, the doctor's fair-haired, blue-eyed daughter, came and took him by the hand and looked trustingly up into his face, and said:

"I am so glad. Now you will be my brother, will you not?"

"Yes, Carrie," said Harry, "I will be your brother," and he turned away and stole to his room with his heart full of gratitude and his eyes swimming in tears.

The first thing the kind-hearted Mrs. Blair did was to provide the boy with suitable clothes.

"You can pay me," she said laughing, "out of the first money you earn in your new profession. So don't be proud, Harry, and wound me by refusing them."

Harry accepted. Somehow, it did not seem like receiving charity to accept things from this kind-hearted family. In his new, neatly fitting suit he looked quite like a gentleman's son, and he felt all the more satisfaction that his appearance would now do no discredit to the kind doctor's family. Dr. Blair, besides practicing his profession, was a farmer in a small way; or, rather, he owned a small farm on which his residence stood, and he superintended its culture. The work was principally done by a man who lived in another house on the place, but during the busy season he sometimes hired extra help. One day he announced that he had hired a young man to assist Mr. Gwin, the man before alluded to, and that he would be an inmate of their home for a few weeks. That evening this man ate at the doctor's table, and Harry saw him for the first time. He did not like his looks. He was about twenty-two or twenty-three years of age, rather short in stature and heavy set, with small, uneasy looking eyes and a low, receding forehead. During the meal

Harry found that this man, who had given his name as Perry Blake, was watching him narrowly at every opportunity, when he thought himself unobserved, but when the boy looked him squarely in the face the man's eyes fell and he seemed confused. All this impressed Harry unfavorably, yet he thought that perhaps it was nothing more than awkwardness or bashfulness, and tried to dismiss the subject from his mind. After the meal was over and this man had gone to his work about the barn, Mrs. Blair asked her husband where he had found him. The doctor confessed that he knew nothing about him. That he came to him to solicit work, and Mr. Gwin happening to be in need of help at that time, he had employed him.

"There is something in his appearance that I do not like," said Mrs. Blair.

"Well, I can't say that he is very prepossessing," said the doctor, laughing; "but good looks are not absolutely essential to a farm hand, and so I suppose we must forgive his lack of beauty if he performs his work well, and time will decide that."

"Did you notice his eyes, mamma?" asked Carrie. "He can't look you in the face."

"Oh ho! that's it, is it?" laughed the doctor. "So my young lady prefers to be stared at, and because this poor fellow fails to pay her the homage she expects, she does not like him. Is that it, puss?"

"Now pa, you know it is n't," said the young lady decidedly. "I don't care, he looks just like the tramps who come begging at the kitchen door. Besides, I was not thinking of myself at all. I referred to Harry. I saw the fellow look at him slyly from under his lids, but when Harry looked at him his eyes fell, and he could not look up. I don't like him."

"And what do you think of him, Harry," asked the doctor.

"I don't know," replied the boy, "perhaps he is only bashful."

"Yes, that's it," replied Dr. Blair. "But this is giving a great deal of importance to a very small subject. Of course he is not here as an associate, only as a farm hand. He can occupy the little room at the end of the hall, beyond Harry's, and he will not interfere with the peculiar tastes of these ladies, I assure you." So he dismissed the subject.

But the doctor's wife and daughter were right. There was something wrong, and if they could only have understood it at once what trouble and sorrow they all might have avoided.

Perry Blake performed his work well, and gave no cause of complaint, and the prejudices against him died out as the days passed on and they became familiar with his presence about the house. Two or

three times he was absent all night, but as he stated that he had been stopping with a friend at Calusa, nothing was thought of the matter. Once Harry saw him in conversation with a man near the barn, and, as he approached, the stranger walked rapidly away. There was something in the movements and general appearance of this man which seemed familiar to the boy, but as it was in the dusk of the evening he could not be certain; but he thought to himself "that looks like Black Flynn." When, however, he asked Blake who it was, the latter replied that it was a friend from Calusa, and Harry did not pursue the subject.

Thus matters remained for two weeks. It lacked but three days of the trial. In the evening the doctor asked Harry to ride to Calusa and get his watch, which he had left there with the watchmaker to be repaired. He gave him an order for the watch, and with a light heart the boy rode away. As he passed the front of the house Mrs. Blair and Carrie were standing on the porch. The doctor's wife nodded kindly to him, and the daughter waved her handkerchief gayly after him. Harry looked back at the turn of the lane and raised his hat.

"Isn't he handsome?" said Carrie, with childish unconsciousness.

"Do you think so?" said Mrs. Blair, looking at her daughter with a smile.

"And honest, and brave, and good?" continued the girl, not noticing her mother's smile.

"Take care, Carrie," said Mrs. Blair. "Young ladies of your age must not think too much of brave and handsome young gentlemen of seventeen."

"Pshaw! mamma," said the girl with a blush, "isn't he my brother, or the same as a brother?"

"And yet, Carrie, you must remember the circumstances under which he came here, and that we have not known him quite a year."

"What of that?" said the girl with some show of spirit. "Don't we know that he is kind, and honest, and true. You know he is."

"I hope so," replied the mother. "Indeed, I am fully convinced of it. Poor boy, he has had a hard life."

"But that is all over now," said Carrie; "since papa has taken the matter in hand, I know that he will become a great and good man."

"I hope so," said Mrs. Blair, thoughtfully.

"He is not like other boys of the village," continued the girl, gazing dreamily down the road where the subject of this conversation had disappeared from sight. "They are horrid teases, rough as bears, and so rude. He has never said an unkind word since he has been here. He is always patient, no matter how much I tease him, always kind and ready to help me

with my flowers, and you know, mamma, he understands nearly as much as I do about music, although he told me that he never saw a piano until he came here, and did not know one note of music from another."

"He has certainly been a very apt pupil, and I fear you are a very partial teacher. Be careful, Carrie, that your interest in this boy does not grow into something more than mere sisterly affection," said Mrs. Blair, as she looked kindly down into her daughter's face for a moment, and then, turning, entered the house.

Carrie was startled at her mother's words, and although scarcely understanding them, she blushed and sighed as she looked down the road over which hung a thin cloud of dust, marking the way he had gone.

But while this conversation was going on between mother and daughter, another scene was enacting in a different part of the house, which was destined to materially change the status of things at the doctor's home.

Perry Blake heard the doctor give Harry directions about getting the watch, and had they been noticing him then, they would have seen a change come into those uncertain looking eyes. They appeared to fairly dance with delight. He was evidently pleased

from some cause. He stole away from the house and went to the barn. Here he remained until he saw Harry ride down the lane. The doctor had gone to see Mr. Gwin, and the other occupants of the house were standing on the porch, as we have said. Perry Blake entered the house through the kitchen and passed up stairs, as if to go to his room. But he did not go so far. He stopped in front of Harry's door. He listened. He could hear the voices of Mrs. Blair and her daughter in conversation, and he knew that he would not be disturbed in the work he had now on hand. He entered the room. Harry's clothes, the suit he had brought in his bundle to the doctor's house, were hanging in a little closet. These he made into a bundle, which he tied up in a handkerchief, and, concealing it under his coat, stole softly down the stairs. As he passed through the sitting room he saw a valuable bracelet lying on a table. He snatched it up and thrust it into his pocket, then passing out of the house as he had entered it, he went to the barn again and concealed his plunder among some barrels in the granary, and proceeded with his evening's work as if nothing had happened, and when Dr. Blair returned there was no indication that anything was wrong. But as soon as the doctor entered the house, Blake stole away and walked rapidly in the direction of the great swamp before men-

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tioned, taking his stolen goods with him. In little more than half an hour's hard walking and running he was there. There were but few of the tramps on the island, but among those present was Black Flynn. Although most of the tramps from this neighborhood had gone east, as intimated in a previous chapter, Flynn had remained, and many of his gang had returned, the anticipated strike having proved a failure. Perry Blake held a hurried conversation with Flynn, who in turn spoke a few rapid words to three of his companions, and they at once left the island by means of the bridge of fallen trees. After they had departed, Flynn said:

"Now, Shorty, you must go back at once."

"What for?" asked Blake, or Shorty, as he had been called. "Isn't my work done? I'm tired of this thing. Here I've been mor'n two weeks, a workin' like a nigger, while you fellers have been havin' a good time loafin' round here. I tell you the thing's about played."

"But you must go back until after the trial," said Flynn. "If they miss you they will be sure to suspect. Did you bring the boy's clothes?"

"Yes."

"Anything else?"

"Yes, this 'ere," said Blake, displaying the bracelet.

"Well, keep it. It will pay you well for all this work, I should think. But go at once, and be in bed at your usual time. Keep your mouth shut, and pretend to know nothing whatever about it, and the thing will work out all right."

The man muttered something to himself, but made no audible reply.

"By the way, do you think the boy will get back to the woods before night?" asked Flynn, as Perry started away.

"He can if he wants to," was the answer.

"Well, it doesn't matter much. The road is lonely and there is not a house within a mile. It will be safe enough," said Flynn. "Be on the watch, and bring me word when you think there is anything I should know. Always come in the night, if possible, and be careful."

Blake returned as he was bidden, and was at the doctor's house again before he was missed.

CHAPTER IX.

IN THE HANDS OF THE TRAMPS.

In the meantime Harry had arrived at Calusa. He called at the watchmaker's and presented his order, but there were still some slight repairs unfinished and he was forced to wait. It was sundown before he got the watch. It was a valuable gold one, and the watchmaker carefully inspected the signature to the order, comparing it with some other writing which he took from a drawer, before he gave it up, and even then he looked sharply at Harry as if he suspected all was not right. The boy observed all these motions, and, interpreting them aright, he blushed, half with anger, half with shame, at the suspicion they hinted. The man was apparently satisfied at last, and Harry left the shop. Twilight was coming rapidly on, and he had five miles to go over a somewhat lonely road before he reached home. He mounted his horse and rode rapidly away, fearing that darkness would overtake him on the road. Nor were his fears ungrounded. It was dark before he

had traversed half the distance. It was not danger that he dreaded, however, but the inconvenience of traveling in the dark. While entering a long, gloomy strip of woods, about three miles from home, he thought he saw the shadow of a man flit across the road before him. Instinctively he drew the rein, but then, laughing at himself for his sudden fear, he continued on his way. Just as he had reached the thickest and darkest part of the wood three men sprang into the road at his side. One of them grasped the horse by the bit while the other two seized Harry and dragged him to the ground. Before he had time to collect his wits enough to cry out, he was securely bound and gagged. Then the men spoke for the first time.

"Take the horse on to the first field and turn him in," said one. "If he goes home without the boy they will begin the search for him at once."

"Why not tie the boy on the horse and lead him with us?" asked another.

"Don't be a fool!" said the first speaker. "We'd have to keep the road if we led the horse, and I'm not goin' to risk meetin' anybody. We must carry the kid across the fields to the big swamp."

One of the men took the horse and turned him into the nearest field, and on his return they seized Harry and carried him away through the woods.

The boy tried to cry out, but he was too securely gagged. An oval piece of wood had been forced into his mouth, distending his jaws in a painful manner, and was tied by a cord running back of his head so tightly as to make his mouth bleed. The men took turns in carrying the boy. Sometimes one would throw him across his shoulder like a bag of grain and carry him in that painful position for a time, and sometimes two of them would take him, one at his head and one at his feet. Thus they went on across fields, over fences, through woods, for what appeared to Harry an age of agony. At last they entered a large wood, and pressing their way through the thick underbrush for a time, they came to the edge of a large swamp. This they entered, walking on fallen trees and projecting roots, until they reached the island already described. Harry, who luckily had the use of his eyes, as far as they could serve him in the darkness, now saw the light of a fire shining through the trees, and heard the sound of voices. In a few minutes his captors bore him to the light, where he beheld ten or fifteen tramps collected about the fire, making such a scene as that described in a preceding chapter. The tramps all ceased their occupation of cooking and eating when those who bore Harry approached, and one of them came forward to meet them.

"So," he said, "you've caught the young imp?"

"Yes," replied one of the new-comers. "It was all cut and dried to our hand. Shorty told us he was to go to town, and Black Flynn sent us to nab him as he came back."

"Why the d——l didn't you blindfold him before you brought him here?"

"Didn't think of it," replied the man. "But that makes no difference. He'll not leave this camp till we do."

"Still you ought to have tied the young chap's eyes," replied the tramp. "Take the gag out of his mouth."

One of the men removed the gag.

"Now, you young rascal, what do you think of that?" asked the tramp, who was known among his fellows as "Limpy Jim," and in whom Harry thought he recognized the actor of the wooden-leg farce he had seen played nearly a year before.

"I do not know what to think," he replied, painfully, for his jaws had been distended so long that he could scarcely talk. "What have I done that you should treat me in this way?"

"What've you done?" said Jim. "I'll tell you what you've done. You've tried to stretch two of our friends. That's what you've done. But it's all

right now. They'll get no chinning out of you at the trial now, don't you forget."

Harry understood it all now. He had been kidnapped to prevent his appearance at the trial, which was shortly to come on. Without his evidence the prisoners would go free. Why had he not thought of this in time, and been on his guard? But it was too late now.

"Search him," said Limpy Jim, who seemed to be a kind of leader among them. Busy hands soon emptied his pockets.

"Hello!" cried one, "Here's a ticker. Gold, too, by ——!" he continued, as he held up the watch to the light."

It was the doctor's watch. In the excitement and pain consequent upon his capture and abduction, Harry had forgotten all about it.

"Oh, sir," he cried, "do not take that from me. It is not mine. It belongs to Doctor Blair. Keep me, sir, until after the trial if you wish, but send the doctor his watch. He'll think I stole it and ran away." And upon this view of the subject, which just that instant occurred to him, he burst into tears. The tramp laughed.

"That's just what we want," he said. "Let the doctor think the young cub has sloped with his

watch, and they'll not look for him here, and they'll not suspect us, neither."

"Will you not return it?" asked Harry.

"Not much. Do you think we're all fools?" said Limpy Jim.

"Oh, sir," pleaded the boy, "do not ruin me. Doctor Blair has given me a home. He has treated me like his own son. He has promised to send me to school, and give me a chance to rise in the world. Do have pity on me, and do not blight all my prospects just as they were so bright."

The only reply he received was a loud taunting laugh in which all the tramps joined. When Harry found that his petition was received with jeers, his heart swelled with indignation, and, struggling to his feet as best he could in his pinioned condition, he raised his head, shook the tears from his eyes and looked proudly and defiantly at his tormenters.

"You have the forms of men," he cried, "and yet you are not men; you have not the kindness and courtesy of brutes; you are a set of contemptible cowards. Twenty of you capturing and torturing one poor boy. Yet, I tell you what, boy as I am, I will be even with you yet. My whole heart was set on the bright career which this morning seemed to open before me, and now by your cruel act you have blighted it all. Do your worst, you cowardly dogs,

but, mark my words, I'll yet live to see some of you hanged."

During this tirade the tramps had gradually pressed about him, and Limpy Jim raised his arm to strike the boy to the earth. But the blow did not fall. A voice behind them cried out sharply:

"Hold on! Drop that!" and Black Flynn strode into the circle. The tramps fell back.

"What does all this mean?" said Flynn, looking around upon the crowd. "I ordered you to capture this boy and keep him until after the trial, but I do not intend that he shall be abused. He has done you no harm."

"No harm!" said he who was called Limpy Jim. "Haint he put two of our best men in limbo, and if he gets a chance won't he stretch their necks?"

"Well, keep him away from the trial, but don't blame him. Let Sandy and Toney blame themselves. Why did they turn our fraternity into a nest of highwaymen and murderers? You all know that the shedding of blood is forbidden us. We live off of the country, for it is ours, but human life must be held sacred, except in self-defense. Give me that watch!" The tramp obeyed.

"Now, boy, I will keep this until after the trial; then, if you will do as I wish, you can have it to return to the doctor."

"I will do anything consistent with honor to get it back," replied Harry.

"Well, we'll talk of that another time," said Flynn.

Harry was now unbound, but closely watched. The tramps renewed their occupation of getting supper, and the boy beheld such a scene as has already been described. He came to the conclusion that the tramps were not such objects of pity as some people supposed. Few of the farmers in the vicinity lived as well as they did. Black Flynn brought Harry some slices of broiled pork and some bread and butter, but the boy could not eat. When their supper was finished the tramps began to enjoy themselves after their usual fashion. Stories were told and songs sung, all more or less of what might be called a "flash" order, until, at last, some one called for a song from Black Flynn. The call was taken up and repeated by all the tramps, until Flynn yielded to their demand, and, without comment, sang in a clear, musical voice the following:

SONG OF THE TRAMP.

Oh! jolly and free is the life of the tramp,
As he roams over valley and hill;
The sun is his fire and the moon is his lamp,
And 'tis nature that settles the bill.
And he drinks at the fountain and rill;
For he comes and he goes at his will.
And under the hedges he hides from the damp,
When the winds of the evening are chill.

And when he grows hungry he's only to call,
  And his food is prepared to his hand.
The fields and the gardens, the orchards and all,
  Are awaiting his slightest demand;
  For 'tis he that possesses the land,
  And his tenants obey his command;
And the fullness of summer, the richness of fall,
  Drop into his suppliant hand.

He lives at his ease, and he feasts like a lord,
  And never a cent does he pay,
For fools will work on, and their labors afford
  The means for his pleasure and play.
  Then let them go toiling away,
  In the dust and the heat of the day—
The tramp can lie down to his rest on the sward
  While the farmer grows weary and gray.

Oh! where is the use to toil on till the cramp
  Of old age have distorted the frame;
Till death in his mercy just puffs out the lamp
  As he pities the wavering flame?
  Then pride in its folly may blame,
  And slaves wear a blush at the shame;
For me I will live, and I'll die like a tramp,
  And be proud to acknowledge the name.

After the applause following this song had died away the tramps disposed themselves, each after his fashion, for sleep. Black Flynn, however, still sat with Harry, a little way apart from the crowd.

"What do you think of tramp life now?" he said to the boy. "Are they not well fed? Do they not live like kings?"

"They certainly appear to have plenty to eat,"

replied Harry, "and yet when they come begging for food they look so hungry and forlorn it is almost impossible to refuse them."

"A trick of the trade, my boy," said Flynn. "All trades have their tricks. See the unctuous, oily tradesman, rubbing his hands, bowing and smiling to trap you with his wares. See the lordly banker with his look of mighty importance and dignity as if the weight of the financial world was on his shoulders and its wealth in his coffers. A trick, my boy, to cheat you of your confidence and rob you of your money. See the wily politician with his bland smile and hearty grasp of the hand, inquiring after your family, whom he would not know from the children of Israel, and pretending to interest himself in your welfare when, perhaps, he does not even know your occupation. A trick of his trade to gull the unwary and secure votes. And even the saintly priest puts on a heavenly smile to hide his sensual nature from the innocent lambs of his flock whom he intends to make his prey. All, all tricks of trade, my boy."

"But this trade of yours is a terrible one," said Harry, "judging from what I have already seen of it. It deals in blood."

"No, no!" said Flynn quickly. "That has nothing to do with it. There are not half the men who belong to the fraternity of tramps who know the object of our organization."

"Have you a regular organization?" asked Harry.

"Yes; regularly organized and officered," answered Flynn.

"Are you its chief?"

"No, only one of them."

"Yet these men obey you as if they feared you?"

"They dare not disobey. The whole thing is a mystery to them, yet they know that should they rebel against authority, it would not be a week before they would be arrested for their crimes, and end their lives in the penitentiary or on the scaffold."

"But you spoke of the object of your association. I do not fully understand it. What is it?"

"That I can not reveal further than I have already done," replied Flynn. "But when the proper time comes, when we are strong enough, then the world will know. This much I can tell you. It is not highway robbery and murder."

"Is it revolution?"

"That is nearer it. But I can not tell you more until you determine to join us."

"That will never be," said Harry firmly.

"We will see," replied Black Flynn.

"But if you do not countenance robbery and murder, why do you allow such men in your association?" asked Harry.

"They will be of use when the time comes."

"What! to murder?"

"No, no! But I can not tell you more. See, they are looking this way. And now one word about yourself. If I will vouch for you to these men, will you give me your word that you will not try to escape for three days?"

"No, I will not," replied Harry promptly. "I shall certainly escape if I can."

"Well, so be it," answered Flynn. "But let me tell you one thing, I have promised to release you at the end of that time and to return to you the doctor's watch."

"Yes."

"Well, if you escape I will keep the watch; that's all." And he rose and walked away.

Harry soon found that three of the tramps were to remain awake as a guard over him. If he had indulged any hope of escape during the night he gave it up. He lay down and tried to form his plans for future action, but his mind ran less upon his own situation than upon the strange being into whose hands he had fallen. This man was certainly an anomaly. A tramp who taught philosophy; a thief who talked of honesty; a scholar who herded with the lowest and most ignorant class of humanity. The more he thought the firmer he became in his conclusion that the tramp was a bad, dangerous man, who had only

presented to him the less odious side of his character; that his pretended friendship was for the purpose of winning his confidence in order to bind him to himself by some act which would make him an outlaw. Why Flynn was so anxious to secure him as a follower he could not fully understand. The reason assigned on a previous occasion did not satisfy him ; but he would be on his guard and avoid all the traps that might be set for him. Firm in his purpose to resist all the threats, blandishments and temptations of his would-be associate he felt strong enough to defy him and his companions in vagrancy and crime. He fell asleep at last, reiterating to himself the resolution he had formed. But he was in the hands of a wily foe who was fully determined to bend him to his will. How he succeeded those who pursue this narrative will see.

CHAPTER X.

THE SEARCH FOR THE BOY.

In the meantime, how was it at the doctor's home? Night came, and Harry was still absent. Dr. Blair sat down to read and await his return. Bed time came and no Harry. Mrs. Blair and Carrie retired, and the doctor read on and on, and waited. Ten o'clock! Eleven! Midnight! He threw down his book with a start, and went to the door to listen. No sound save the chirping of the crickets in the meadow, or the hooting of an owl in the distant wood.

"Wife," he called, "I am uneasy about that boy. I must go and see what has happened."

Mrs. Blair tried to dissuade the doctor from his purpose, but his anxiety was too great to permit him to remain idle in this suspense, and, calling to Perry Blake, he bade him saddle a horse and bring it to the door. This the man did, grumbling at being disturbed, and muttering to himself as he saw the doctor ride away:

"It'll not be long till I'll stop all this workin' and slavin' and gettin' up in the night. I wish Black Flynn had to try it awhile hisself, and see how he'd like it. I'll not git into another sich a scrape soon, you bet."

So, grumbling, he ascended to his room, and, listening from the window he heard the sound of the horse's feet clattering far up the road, as the doctor rode away in the night.

"He'll not find the boy, that's certain," he said with a chuckle, as he crawled to bed. "He's at the camp long afore this. I wish I was there, too."

Dr. Blair rode on, stopping every now and then to listen; but he heard no sound of hoofs, save those made by his own horse. He had ridden more than half way to town without making any discovery, and was debating in his mind whether he should proceed to Calusa or return home and wait till morning, when he heard the whinny of a horse at the road-side, and thought he recognized the sound. His horse evidently did recognize it, for he answered loudly and eagerly. The doctor rode to the fence and found on the inside of the field the horse that Harry had ridden, saddled and bridled as if its rider had just dismounted. He was now thoroughly alarmed, and called loudly on the boy by name, but there was no answer, save the scream of a startled screech-owl

from the wood behind him. He rode the entire length of the fence, followed by the horse upon the inside, and found at the corner a place where the rails evidently had been thrown down and carelessly replaced. Here was where Harry's horse had been turned into the field. The doctor dismounted to examine the ground, but it was impossible to distinguish tracks by the pale light of the stars, which had served him for his other discoveries. His first suspicion was that Harry had absconded with the watch.

"No," he said, after a moment's thought, "if he had intended to run away he would have ridden off on the horse. Even if he did not wish to steal the animal, he would have taken that opportunity to get as far away as possible while it was yet dark, and would have turned the horse loose in the morning. Some accident has befallen him. I will go on." He remounted, and leaving the horse Harry had ridden still in the field, rode toward the town, looking carefully in the road, as well as the darkness would permit, expecting every minute to find the boy lying helpless where he had been thrown. But he arrived at Calusa without making any further discoveries, and went directly to the watch-maker's. Arousing this man, with some difficulty, he learned that Harry had been there and taken the watch away.

"It was all right, wasn't it?" asked the man anxiously.

"Yes, yes," replied Dr. Blair. "I sent him for it, but he has not returned. I found the horse he rode, in a field about half way home, but have seen nothing of the boy."

"Are you sure he is honest?" asked the man.

"Sure? Yes. At least I believe so," was the reply. "Why do you ask?"

"Well, I didn't know," said the watch-maker. "I looked quite sharply at him, for I did not like to trust so valuable a watch to a stranger, and he blushed and looked queer, I thought, but I hope it's all right."

"Yes, I hope so," said the doctor, as he turned and rode toward home.

Dr. Blair was in a study. At times he felt that he could risk his life on Harry's honesty, and at others, doubts would steal into his mind in spite of himself. It was nearly morning when he reached home, no wiser as to the fate of the boy than when he set out. He did not go to bed. He told his wife of the discovery he had made, and expressed a determination to continue the search as soon as it was light enough to do so with certainty.

Dr. Blair's household was astir at dawn. Suspicion, having once gained a place in the doctor's mind, kept growing until he began to pursuade himself that Harry had deceived him. His first act in the morning was to visit the boy's room. His next to

look in the little closet where he kept his clothes. They were gone. The doctor's suspicion had created doubts in the mind of Mrs. Blair, and she also began an investigation. She now remembered her carelessness in leaving the bracelet upon the table. She had not thought of it the evening before, but now she entered the room with a trembling step, dreading to have her fears confirmed. It was gone. She sat down and, burying her face in her hands, she sobbed aloud. It was not the loss of the bauble. Willingly would she have sacrificed a hundred such to know that the boy, whom she had learned to love as a son, was innocent. But this confirmation of the dreadful suspicion almost broke her heart. "Poor boy, poor boy!" she sobbed. "Why did we throw these temptations in his way?" Dr. Blair and Carrie entered the room at the same time.

"Well?" said Mrs. Blair, looking up through her tears.

"His clothes are gone," said the doctor.

"And a valuable bracelet which I carelessly left lying on the table last evening is also gone," said Mrs. Blair.

"He is a thief," said the doctor, angrily.

Carrie had been standing in the center of the room gazing from one to the other of her parents with a frightened look. But when the doctor uttered the

last words her eyes blazed and her cheeks flushed with indignation.

"He is not a thief," she cried. "He is true as steel!" And she flashed a look of defiance about her like a beautiful little tigress at bay.

Dr. Blair and his wife looked at her with astonishment. It was not so much the words as the manner of the girl which struck them with sudden wonder. Her manner had always been mild and her words gentle; but now she seemed half a head taller in her attitude of defiance, her eyes flashing with anger, her head thrown forward and her neck curved, as she stood like a beautiful snake ready to strike.

Mrs. Blair buried her face in her hands again, and the doctor turned away with a sigh. It was to him a revelation—terrible now that the boy he had loved and trusted had so cruelly deceived him. Then indignation overcame his grief, and, turning to his daughter, he said:

"Carrie, you forget yourself. You must look at this thing in its true light. We have all acted very foolishly. We took this boy into our home, knowing nothing of his antecedents further than he saw fit to reveal them to us. He came to us a tramp, and we trusted him like a son and brother. Now, when it is too late, we see the result of our mistaken charity. A temptation, terrible no doubt to him, has

overcome his new-born resolutions of honesty—for I can not doubt that he was at times sincere—and he has gone back to his old occupation, betraying our confidence and wounding our hearts. However much it may give us pain, Carrie, we must not close our eyes to the truth. He is a thief."

"He is not," cried Carrie. "If there is a thief about this house, there he goes, sneaking away from that door, where he has been listening to us."

Dr. Blair turned quickly, and caught a glimpse of Perry Blake as he disappeared in the hall.

"I tell you if the bracelet is stolen he is the thief," she continued, fiercely.

"But the watch? His clothes?" said the doctor.

"I don't care," cried the girl. "Poor Harry is not a thief, and some day you will be sorry for turning against him at the first sign of suspicion. If you want to find the thief, watch Perry Blake."

"But, Carrie, Perry Blake couldn't take the watch," said the doctor.

The girl was silent.

"Come, Carrie," said Mrs. Blair, now advancing to the side of her daughter. "Let us reserve our opinion until this thing is investigated farther. Time will tell who is right. God grant that he be, as you say, true as steel." She put her arm tenderly about the waist of her child, and led her sobbing from the room.

After a hurried breakfast, at which Carrie did not appear, Dr. Blair again set off for town. This time he rode rapidly at once to the field in which he had found the horse. From this point he began a careful examination. Luckily no vehicle had yet passed to obliterate any tracks that might have been left in the dust. On reaching the gap in the fence, he found the tracks of a man leaving the road and returning to it again. Whoever had turned the horse into the field it was evidently not Harry, for the tracks were much larger than his. From here he traced the man backwards to the center of the wood, where he saw unmistakable signs of a struggle, and the print where some one had lain in the dust. These marks, it is true, were partially obliterated by the tracks of his own horse the night before, yet enough remained to convince him that some one had fallen in the road at this point. He was filled with anxiety for the boy, and forgetting his suspicions, he rode at a gallop toward the town.

His first call here was made on Mr. Rickard, the constable, to whom he stated the case and related his discoveries. Mr. Rickard was somewhat of a detective in his way, and as soon as he learned the state of things he cried:

"I see it all. It's as plain as the nose on a man's face."

"Well, what do you make of it?" asked the doctor.

"They have carried him away to prevent him from appearing at the trial."

"Carried him away? Who?"

"Why, the tramps," replied the constable. "My dear sir, I have had dealings enough with that gentry to know that they hang together like other thieves. You will find in the end that this is the true state of the case."

"Well, what is to be done?" asked the doctor.

"That I can not tell until I have looked over the ground," answered the constable. "I will be ready in twenty minutes."

In less than half an hour the men were on the road. When they reached the scene of the struggle, the constable dismounted and examined the ground. He traced the man to where the horse had been turned into the field and back again, pointed out to the doctor where Harry's captors had entered the wood, and, by careful watching, was enabled to trace the tracks for a little distance, but the ground was dry and hard, and the marks soon became indistinct, and they were compelled to give up the search.

"I will go home with you," said Mr. Rickard, "and perhaps we can find some clue there."

On the way he questioned Dr. Blair about the inmates of his house.

"Besides my own family, there are three inmates," said the doctor, "or, rather, there were three," he added, "before the disappearance of this boy. There now remain a servant girl and a man named Perry Blake, who assists on the farm."

"Who is this Perry Blake?"

"I know nothing of him, except that he came to me for work, and as I happened to need help at the time, I engaged him."

"Does he have access to the room from which the bracelet was taken?"

"He could enter it if he wished."

"Could he enter the boy's room?"

"He could."

"Was he at home last night?"

"Yes."

"Had he any opportunity to be absent for a time without your knowing it?"

"I think not for any great length of time."

"Still he might have had a confederate."

"True; I had not thought of that."

"Well, I must see this man."

"Nothing will be easier," replied the doctor. "Remain at my house for dinner. He will doubtless be at the table, and you can observe him at your leisure."

When they arrived at the doctor's house Perry

Blake was at work in the fields. Mr. Rickard examined the premises and carefully inspected Blake's room, but found nothing suspicious.

"I didn't expect it. If he has taken the bracelet he has hidden it securely before this time," he said, as he returned to the room where Mrs. Blair and Carrie were sitting.

"You talk as if you thought he was the guilty party," said the doctor.

"Well, I do think so," said Mr. Rickard bluntly.

Mrs. Blair looked startled, while Carrie's face fairly blazed with triumphant delight, and she flashed upon him a look full of gratitude.

"But how do you account for the boy's clothes being missing?" asked the doctor.

"The easiest thing in the world," said Mr. Rickard. "That is just the very thing they would do. Don't you see that if the clothes are missing, and he is missing, without further light on the affair, the natural inference would be that they disappeared together? I tell you I see it all. It is a very commonplace plot. Now let us see how this thing stands. Here is a boy, who must be got rid of before the trial comes on. The parties concerned contrive to get a man whom they control introduced here to give them information of the boy's coming and going. This journey to Calusa is made known to his confederates, and the

plot is hastily laid. The boy's clothing is taken to lead you to think that he has run away. He is waylaid upon the road and carried off to some place of concealment, and your watch goes with him, to still further increase your suspicion. Do you see it now?"

"It looks reasonable," said the doctor. "But the bracelet?"

"That, no doubt, was an after-thought," said the constable. "The man who stole the clothes saw the bracelet as he passed the open door, and appropriated it on his own account."

"But why does he still remain here if he is the thief, as you suspect?"

"To turn suspicion upon the boy. Suppose that this man had also disappeared? Would not your suspicions naturally have fallen upon him?"

"True!" replied the doctor. "You have convinced me. This man shall be arrested at once."

"Not so fast," answered the constable. "Remember you have no positive evidence yet. Besides, if you wish to find the boy you must keep the run of this man. On second thought, I will not remain to dinner. It will be best for him not to see me. You must hire another hand for a day or two. I will return at once and send you the man you want. Perry Blake does not know him. He is my wife's brother, who is visiting us for a few days. He is a detective

policeman, and well up to this kind of thing, and will follow this man if he attempts to communicate with his confederates, which he will doubtless do. Find him something to do to cover suspicion—something not too hard, for Jack is not partial to hard work—and let him occupy the boy's room. If anything is done it must be done at once, for the day after to-morrow is the trial."

"Well, Mr. Rickard, I will leave the matter in your hands, and do as you wish," said Dr. Blair. "A great weight has been removed from my mind since I have heard your solution of this thing. I was loth to believe that the boy, whom I loved and trusted, could so cruelly betray my confidence, and I have no doubt these ladies are very grateful to you."

Mrs. Blair pressed the constable's hand kindly, and Carrie beamed on him a look of gratitude so joyful and bright that he gazed upon her with wonder and admiration, and thought to himself as he took his departure: "That girl has more than a sister's interest in this affair, or I am much mistaken."

Shortly after Dr. Blair and his wife heard Carrie at the piano, singing, to a kind of triumphant melody, the following

SONG.

The diamond may sparkle, the ruby may glow,
The sapphire may burn and the emerald shine;
Their glitter is cold as the sunlight on snow,
For they bear in them ever the chill of the mine.

But fair is the spirit whose radiance shines
To light up the eye as the morn on the dew;
And richer than jewels that hide in the mines,
The wealth of a heart that is honest and true.

Oh! ships never bore, on the wings of the wind,
A treasure more precious from over the waves;
And madrépores, circling the shores of the Ind,
Ne'er hide such a jewel away in their caves.

Then welcome the world to its silver and gold,
Its jewels and gems; I will choose for my due
What wealth never bought and what greed never sold—
The love of a heart that is honest and true.

That evening a new farm hand was domiciled in the doctor's house, to the surprise of Mr. Gwin and the chagrin and discomfort of Perry Blake, who, however, was entirely unsuspicious of the cause.

Night came and the doctor's family retired to rest. The new man, who had given the name of Brown, was shown to Harry's room. Perry Blake had already gone to bed. Brown closed his door and turned the key loudly in the lock, and then turned it softly back again. He then removed his heavy cowhide boots and drew from under the bed, where they had been previously placed, a pair of rubber-soled shoes, which he put on, and threw himself upon the bed to await the progress of events. Nothing, however, transpired, and toward morning he gave up his watching and went to sleep. The next day he labored in the field with Blake and tried

to ingratiate himself into his confidence, but the latter was morose and taciturn, and the detective learned nothing. The next night came, the last before the trial. Brown repeated his formula of the night before, but with better success. About ten o'clock he heard Blake moving softly about in his room. Presently he opened his door and passed through the hall and down the stairs. The detective stole softly after him. Blake passed through the kitchen, the door of which he unlocked from the inside, and passed out. The detective waited a moment, and then followed. The tramp had disappeared, but, listening intently, he heard his steps down the lane and stole after him, keeping in the shadow of the fence. Thus the two continued down the lane, across the fields, and through the woods, Blake suspecting nothing, and scarcely ever looking back, and Brown walking silently behind, just close enough to keep him in sight through the gloom of the night. The tramp took the route over which the reader has followed him before, and, after what appeared to his pursuer a weary time, they arrived at the swamp. The glimmer of a fire could be distinctly seen upon the tree tops far toward the heart of the swamp, and the detective did not doubt that he had discovered the rendezvous of the tramps. He marked the spot at which Blake disappeared, but did not attempt to fol-

low him. He hid and waited, for he did not duobt that the tramp would return in a short time. Nor was he mistaken. After half an hour's waiting, during which he could occasionally catch the sound of voices from the distance, Blake returned and walked rapidly back toward the doctor's house. Brown, however, did not follow him. As soon as Blake was entirely out of sight and hearing the detective entered the swamp, found the bridge of trees, and crossed to the island. Pausing to reconnoitre, he saw before him the camp of the tramps. Fires were burning, or rather smoking, in all directions, arranged evidently to keep off the insects, which infested the swamp in myriads. Occasionally one of these fires would burst into a flame and light up the scene, and at such times he saw the tramps lying asleep in groups or singly, while two or three, evidently guards, were moving about or smothering out the blazing fires with damp wood and decayed leaves. He saw also the object of his search—the boy, whom, from the descripton he had received, he recognized as Harry Lawson, lying upon the ground, while at his side sat a tramp keeping guard over the prisoner. This was all he desired to know at this time. Stealing quietly back over the logs, he walked rapidly toward Dr. Blair's. On arriving at the kitchen door he found it locked. Blake had fastened it from the

inside as he had found it. This was something he had not calculated on, and for a moment he was nonplussed. He was quick-witted, however, and decided in a moment what to do. Going to the front door, he knocked loudly for admittance. Dr. Blair answered the summons from his window, asking what was wanted.

"I want you to see a sick man," answered Brown in a loud tone, disguising his voice; then, in a whisper, just loud enough to reach the doctor's ears: "Come down. It's I—Brown."

"I will be down in a moment," said the doctor loudly, for he understood that Brown had an object in deceiving some one, although he could only suspect whom.

When he came to the door the detective hurriedly related his discoveries.

"Well, what is to be done?" asked the doctor in a low tone.

"One of us must proceed at once to the village near here and procure a warrant and a constable, and arrest these men and release the boy. Is there not a justice at the village?"

"There is," replied the doctor, "and a constable, too."

"Well, it will be best for you to go, since you are acquainted. It will save time. Procure your war-

rant and arrest this Perry Blake at once. We can then proceed to their camp. Let there be plenty of help. We may need it. I will stay here and watch lest our game take the hint and give us the slip."

Dr. Blair proceeded on his mission to the village, and Brown entered the house by the front door and passed to his room, the door of which he found partly open.

"Hello! What does this mean?" he thought. "I am sure I closed this door when I left the room."

Then a sudden thought seemed to strike him, and he stepped lightly to Blake's door. That, too, was open, and the room empty. He ran quickly down stairs to the kitchen door. It stood ajar. The bird had flown.

"Hang the luck," he muttered, "he is smarter than I gave him credit for. He has overheard our conversation, and has gone to warn his confederates. Well, it's no use to follow him now. I could never overtake him. The only thing is to wait until the constable and posse arrive. I guess I've made a mess of this thing after all. I hope they won't find it out at headquarters, or I'd never hear the last of it. Outwitted by a tramp. Ugh!"

It was two hours before Dr. Blair returned with the constable and six men. He was much chagrined to learn of the escape of Blake, for now the tramps

had doubtless left the camp and taken the boy with them. Such, in fact, proved to be the case, for on arriving at the island they found it deserted, and nothing but the smoldering fires remained to show that they had congregated there. The only thing to be done now was to wait for daylight, which by this time was slowly breaking, and then to scour the country in pursuit of the fugitives.

CHAPTER XI.

THE SENTENCE.

THE trial came on, and the two tramps were arraigned and plead not guilty. One important witness was absent. An attempt was made by the prosecution to have the trial postponed; but as the detective was absent, and Dr. Blair knew nothing of his own knowledge concerning Harry's whereabouts, the defense set up the plea that the boy had absconded of his own accord, and they even attempted to prove by the doctor's own evidence that the missing witness had stolen the watch and bracelet. The motion to postpone was overruled and the trial proceeded. The evidence for the prosecution was the same as that given before the justice, with the very important omission of Harry's testimony. In behalf of the defense witnesses were brought forward to prove that on the night of the murder the accused were in quite a different part of the country, and one witness swore that he was with the prisoners during the whole of the night on which the old farmer met his death. An attempt on the

part of the prosecution to impeach the evidence of these witnesses failed, notwithstanding it was the general conviction among the audience that they were perjuring themselves, and everything appeared to favor the escape of the tramps. As the trial passed on, and Harry did not appear, Sandy and Toney became defiant and triumphant, and glanced less frequently at the door. The prosecution saw that the case was lost, unless their principal witness could be produced. Every allowable means was resorted to to delay the trial. There was one ray of hope. The detective was still absent, as was also Constable Rickard. They were both resolute men, and their pride—especially that of the detective—was piqued, and they had expressed a determination to continue the search until Harry was found.

But at length it became impossible to longer delay the proceedings, and the prosecutor arose to close the case. At this moment a commotion at the door arrested his words, and, during the pause, Mr. Rickard entered the room. He walked directly to the prosecutor, and whispered to him for a moment, and then the lawyer's countenance brightened, and a smile of triumph played about his lips as he said, in loud, ringing tones: "Let Harry Lawson be called."

At the announcement of this name the prisoners turned pale, and shrank back with gestures of despair, and their witnesses started for the door.

"Your honor, I demand the arrest of those men," said the lawyer.

"On what charge, Mr. Wilson?" asked the judge.

"On the charge of perjury," was the reply. "Of swearing to a falsehood which they would not have dared to utter if they had known that Harry Lawson could be produced in this court."

One of the witnesses managed to escape through the crowd, but two of them were arrested before they reached the door. Then Harry made his appearance, accompanied by the detective. Dr. Blair wished to meet the boy to tell him how glad he was to receive him back again, but could not do so without pressing his way through the crowd, and so he postponed his greetings until after the trial should be over. Once or twice the boy caught the doctor's eye, and he imagined that it dwelt kindly upon him, but they did not speak. If they could have met then; if the doctor could have clasped the hand of the boy, and given words to the feelings of his heart, Harry would have been satisfied that he still held his place in the esteem of his friend, and much of the misery he was destined to encounter would have been avoided. As the reader has already discovered, the boy was intensely sensitive, and he imagined that the doctor was trying to avoid him. He did not know of the suspicious circumstances which surrounded his disappearance, but

he had lost the doctor's watch, and he blamed himself for it, even while unable to see how he could have avoided it, and he said to himself: "He suspects me. He will never give me his confidence again."

When order was restored—for all had been confusion since the entrance of Harry—the trial proceeded with a full tide against the tramps, who, recognizing the fact that their cause was hopeless, sat, morose and sullen, to the end. In the evidence adduced by the new witnesses, it came out that Mr. Brown, the detective, accompanied by the constable and posse from the village, had pursued the tramps across the country, and had overtaken them about ten miles from their rendezvous. As soon as the fugitives found themselves in danger of capture they had left the boy and scattered, thus making their escape. The detective, knowing the necessity of Harry's early appearance at the trial, had not pursued them further, but, leaving the village constable and his assistants to continue the chase, had brought the boy at once to Calusa. Harry's evidence was clear and conclusive. The attorneys for the defense attempted to break its force by claiming that Harry was in collusion with the tramps in their depredations; that he was, in fact, one of their number, and had himself stolen the watch and bracelet, and that it was not his

intention to return to the trial at all, and he only came when overtaken by the officers of the law. This argument had no effect upon either judge or jury, but the circumstances, as brought forward with all the eloquence and sophistry of a skilled attorney, appeared, to poor Harry, to wear such an air of probability that he could not help thinking: "The doctor believes me guilty. He will never forgive me."

But the trial came to a close, and the jury returned a verdict of murder in the first degree, and the prisoners were sentenced to be hung in the following October.

After the trial was over Dr. Blair looked for Harry but he was nowhere to be seen. He made inquiries of every one who would be at all likely to give him information of the boy's whereabouts, but no one knew what had become of him. The detective and Mr. Rickard were consulted, but they could only suggest that Harry had probably gone to the doctor's home alone. Dr. Blair tried to accept this solution of the mystery, but it was with an uneasy mind that he rode home. As he approached the house he saw Mrs. Blair and his daughter standing at the door, awaiting his coming. They knew from the neighbors that the boy had been rescued from the tramps, and the first question, uttered in concert, was, "Where is Harry?"

"Has he not returned?" asked the doctor.

"No. Where did you leave him?" asked Mrs. Blair.

"I did not leave him," answered the doctor. He left me. He was separated from me by the crowd, and when the trial was over I looked for him, but he had disappeared. I do not know what to think."

"He may be home shortly," said Mrs. Blair. "You may have missed him in the crowd, and he will be compelled to walk home, unless he falls in with some neighbor driving this way.

"It may be as you think," was the answer; yet I can scarcely think so, for I remained at Calusa until all the people had dispersed, and I made inquiries of every one who would be likely to know him, but no one had seen him after he left the court room. I fear there is something wrong."

The evening passed on; night came; but Harry did not appear. Dr. Blair and his wife were distressed, and Carrie wept with mingled feelings of disappointment and fear.

"There is something very mysterious in this," at length said the doctor. "It is not at all probable that the tramps would kidnap him again. Even if it were possible to do so, in the heart of the town, in the midst of the people, they could now have no motive for such an act except revenge, and I scarcely

think they care enough for their comrades to risk so much simply to avenge them. Can it be possible that our first fears were correct, and that he is a rascal."

"I can not believe that," said Mrs. Blair. "All the circumstances which at first led us to suspect him have been explained, and there can be no doubt of his honesty. There is, as you say, something wrong, but I can not think the boy is to blame."

"Well," said the doctor, "there is no use waiting longer for him to-night. He may return in the morning. Let us hope he will."

Dr. Blair retired from the room, but his wife remained with her daughter, who sat with her head bowed in her hands. Mrs. Blair looked yearningly toward her, and sighed almost unconsciously. Carrie heard the sound, and raising her eyes they met those of her mother, and interpreting that glance aright, she rose and approached, and, kneeling at her mother's feet, she buried her head in her lap and sobbed aloud. Mrs. Blair laid her hand caressingly upon the bowed head, and her tears fell upon the sunny tresses of her child.

"Oh, mamma! Have they murdered him?" sobbed Carrie.

"No, no, my child," said the mother. "I can not think that. Let us hope that all will yet be well."

But where was Harry Lawson all this time? During the commotion caused by taking the condemned men from the court room he was separated from Dr. Blair, and borne with the crowd through the door. He did not try to re-enter the room, but loitered about, awaiting the appearance of the doctor. As he was standing somewhat apart from the crowd a boy approached him, and, handing him a piece of paper, said: "A note from Dr. Blair."

Harry opened the folded paper, and a bank bill fell from it and fluttered to the ground. He picked it up mechanically, and saw that it was a ten dollar bill. Then he turned to the note and read:

HARRY LAWSON:—Under the circumstances I think it best that you should not return to my house. We all regret very much the turn things have taken, but I hope your own good sense will tell you that, after what has happened, you had better seek another home. I enclose you ten dollars to assist you for the present. Good-bye. HENRY BLAIR.

At first Harry could not believe the evidence of his senses. He read the note again. He did not doubt that it was the writing of Dr. Blair, for, although he was not very familiar with his signature, he thought he could recognize some peculiarities he had noticed on a former occasion when he carried a note from the doctor to the silversmith. His first impulse was to seek the doctor and demand an explanation.

"No," he said to himself, on second thought, "he

has taken this way to get rid of me without an interview, and I will go. He believes me to be a thief. And Mrs. Blair—Carrie—do they, too, believe this. No! I am sure that—let the others think as they may—Carrie Blair will never believe that I could fall so low. Yet, for her own sake, I must not see her, but must leave without one word of explanation. This is the work of that accursed tramp, and I am again an outcast, with no roof to shelter my head."

Here his eyes fell upon the money.

"Does he think to heal my wounded heart with such as this?" he cried, contemptuously. "I will not take it. I will spurn his gift as he has spurned me, and I will go out from his home as I entered it, without a cent."

He threw down the money, and ground it into the earth with his heel. Then raising his head, and shaking himself like a wrestler preparing for the struggle, he walked away, looking neither to the rlght nor to the left.

CHAPTER XII.

IN SEARCH OF THE RUNAWAY.

ONE evening, shortly after the scene described in the last chapter, Mrs. Shannon sat on the porch in front of the old farm-house, scolding the girl, whom she had at last allowed her husband to hire. Since Harry's departure things had gone all wrong, as it seemed. John Shannon had attempted to do the work of the farm alone, but he missed the ready hand and cheerful help of the boy, and it was a heavy task. Then, just as he was busiest with his spring work, he was taken sick. A farm hand was hired, but he did not remain long. One evening he called for his wages and departed, assigning no reason for his conduct. John Shannon shook his head and sighed, and the man told a neighbor that he "would rather live with a hyena than with Mrs. Shannon." When the farmer recovered so as to get about his fields again he found them overgrown with weeds and the crops ruined. He often thought of the wanderer, and would wonder where he was and how he got on. Mrs. Shannon,

since Harry's departure, had waged her war against the newspapers so successfully that they had been abolished—at her house at least—and no news came to the farm house of the exciting scenes among which his life had been passed since he left its roof.

The woman was in the midst of a most vigorous and vociferous lecture on thrift and cleanliness, delivered for the benefit of the hired girl, when the flow of her eloquence was interrupted by the slamming of the gate in front of the house, and, looking that way, she saw a portly-looking stranger approaching the porch on which she sat. She smoothed out her apron and shut her mouth like a steel-trap. The stranger drew near, and making a courtly bow, asked:

"Does John Shannon live here?"

"He does!" snapped the woman.

"Is he at home?"

"Yes."

"Can I see him?" said the stranger, beginning to lose some of his suavity of manner.

"He is at the barn, I reckon," was the reply.

The stranger turned without a word and walked toward the barn. Here he found the farmer and introduced himself as Charles Conover, from New York. John Shannon bowed, and waited for the stranger to proceed. The latter seated himself upon an up-

turned wagon-bed, and John Shannon sat down by his side.

"About eleven or twelve years ago," said the stranger, "you took a boy by the name of Harry Lawson to raise."

"Yes," replied the farmer. "He was one of a number of boys brought west by a benevolent society and given out to those who would adopt them."

"Exactly," said Mr. Conover. "Does he still reside with you?"

"No."

The stranger started.

"He is not dead?"

"No," replied the farmer. "He ran away about a year ago, and I have heard nothing from him since."

"Have you made no effort to find him."

"I have not. It would have been of no use, even if I had had the means to pursue him."

"What induced him to run away?"

John Shannon sighed, and involuntarily glanced toward the house.

"Ah!" said the stranger. He needed no further explanation, even with his short acquaintance with Mrs. Shannon's tongue.

"And you have no idea where he is now?"

"None whatever," was the reply.

"You wonder, perhaps, why I should ask these questions," said the stranger, or Mr. Conover, as he called himself. "I will tell you. He is my only sister's child. Something over twelve years ago I left New York to take charge in Calcutta of the affairs of the firm with which I had been connected as book-keeper. I left my sister a happy wife and mother, with a comfortable home, and every prospect of happiness before her. I wrote several letters during my absence, but received no answer, and knew nothing of her until my return, about a year ago. I went at once to the neighborhood where I had left her, but they told me there that her husband had died years ago, and that she had moved away, no one knew whither. I advertised for her, but could hear nothing of her whereabouts, and I had about abandoned the search, when, a few days ago, a friend suggested to me to visit the charitable society of which you spoke. I did so, and on examining the records I learned that a boy named Harry Lawson, the name of both my sister's husband and her child, had been sent West and bound to a farmer in Indiana, named John Shannon. I am here now in search of that boy. I am alone in the world, and he is my heir, for my residence in the Indies has not been unproductive of pecuniary benefits. Can you think of no clew, no

thread, be it ever so slender, that I can follow? Did he leave no hint of his destination?"

"None."

"Did he leave no word?"

"He left a letter."

"Have you that letter?"

"It is at the house."

"I must see it," said Mr. Conover. "It may give me some clue to the probable direction he has taken."

"Come, then," said John Shannon, and he led the way to the house.

It was now dark, and Mr. Conover was shown into the family sitting-room, where a lamp was burning. John Shannon introduced the stranger to his wife, and briefly informed her of his business. Mrs. Shannon, to do her justice, appeared affected when Harry's name was mentioned, and treated the stranger with more consideration than, judging from his first meeting with her, he was led to expect. The letter written by Harry was in her possession, and she produced it from the little drawer where she had carefully placed it, and gave it into Mr. Conover's hand. The latter read it over twice. Then he glanced at Mrs. Shannon with a look which she evidently interpreted aright, for her face flushed, and her eyes fell.

"I can find nothing in this to guide me," he said.

"I did not think you would," replied the farmer.

Mr. Conover asked many questions about Harry, his habits, the educational advantages he had enjoyed, etc. The farmer praised him highly, and the tears filled his eyes as he talked of the kind and gentle disposition of the boy, and the readiness and care with which he had always performed his work. Mrs. Shannon fought bravely against the feelings that filled her heart in spite of herself, but they conquered at last, as her husband dwelt lovingly upon the noble traits of the boy, and she covered her face with her apron and sobbed aloud. John Shannon went to her side, and exclaimed: "There, mother! there now!" and the hired girl stared at her with eyes as big as saucers. The stranger ceased questioning at length, and drawing from his pocket a paper which he had purchased on the train, began to read. There was silence for a time. Then suddenly Mr. Conover startled them all by exclaiming:

"Ah!"

All eyes were turned toward him, but he read on, not with the listless air with which he had begun, but with every appearance, in position and feature, of intense interest. At length he said: "Listen to this." Then he read aloud:

THE MURDER TRIAL AT CALUSA.

Yesterday the trial of Sandy Hines and Toney Bazin, for the murder of Mr. Cartwright, came on. At first it appeared as if the

villains would go free; but before the close of the trial Harry Lawson, the boy who has been missing for several days, made his appearance, and on his testimony they were convicted and sentenced to be hung on the 12th of October. The boy stated that he had been kidnapped by the confederates of the murderers to prevent his appearance at the trial, but was finally rescued from their clutches by the united efforts of constable Rickard and Mr. Brown, a detective policeman. His evidence was clear and conclusive, and the jury rendered their verdict without leaving the room. Since writing the above it is rumored that the boy, Harry Lawson, who has been for a year residing with Mr. Blair, a physician who resides near the village of Flavel, has again disappeared, and no trace of him can be found. Dr. Blair is very anxious about him, and fears that he has again fallen into the hands of the tramps.

"Where is this town of Calusa?" asked Mr. Conover, after a moment's silence.

"It is about thirty miles east of this," replied the farmer.

"Then I passed through it yesterday?"

"Yes, I suppose you did."

"Well, I will return there in the morning. This is a clue at last, although it appears to be lost as soon as found."

The next day Mr. Conover stopped at Calusa, and was driven to Dr. Blair's home. Here he was received with every kindness, and the doctor related to him all the incidents that had transpired since his acquaintance with Harry on the night of the murder. The doctor's family were, of course, much surprised to learn that the poor boy they had taken from the society of the tramps was a nephew and heir to a

man of wealth, and had before him a bright and prosperous career. But mingled with their joy at his good fortune was the grief caused by the mystery which surrounded his fate. Dr. Blair could give Mr. Conover no information to guide him in his search.

"He is doubtless traveling on foot wherever he is," he said, "for I do not think he had any money. I have made every inquiry possible since his disappearance, but have learned nothing. I will join you in your endeavors to find him, and render you all the aid I can.

"What have you already done?" asked Mr. Conover.

"I have telegraphed to all the surrounding towns, described him, asked for information, and have put notices in both town and city papers asking him to return."

"Do you think he is in the power of the tramps?"

"I did think so at first, but on more mature deliberation, I do not believe he would voluntarily remain with them. It is scarcely possible that they could retain him against his will for any great length of time. I am inclined to think that he is traveling alone, seeking employment."

"Can you account for his desire to leave you?"

"I can not, unless he has conceived the idea that we suspect him of complicity with the tramps in stealing my watch."

"That, perhaps, is the true solution of the mystery," said Mr. Conover. "I shall start at once in pursuit of him, although it will be a kind of wild goose chase I know. He was traveling eastward when he came here, and he will doubtless continue his journey in the same direction. There will be no chance of falling in with him if I continue to travel on the cars. I shall purchase a horse and buggy and try the country roads."

"I wish I could accompany you," said the doctor, "but it is impossible."

"I do not expect it," replied Mr. Conover. "I am thankful to you for the kindness you have shown the boy, and hope I may be able to return it at some future time. If anything should transpire that you think likely to lead to his discovery, write to me at Cincinnati. I will pass through that city in a few days."

"Papa!" said Carrie, who had been an eager listener to this conversation.

"What, Carrie?" asked Dr. Blair.

"Mr. Brown, the detective; would he not be of service to this gentleman?"

"The girl is right," said the doctor; Mr. Brown is shrewd and has indomitable energy. Besides, he knows the boy, which you do not, and would, in that respect, have the advantage of any man you could employ."

"Where can this man be found?" asked Mr. Conover.

"At Calusa. I will go with you at once, and we will find him," said the doctor.

Mr. Brown was willing enough to undertake the search, and so it was arranged that Dr. Blair should continue to use all the means at his disposal to trace the boy, while Mr. Conover and the detective should pursue and endeavor to overtake him. Dr. Blair saw the two men drive from the town on the main road leading toward the east, and then returned home to await the result of the telegrams he had sent to all the towns within a radius of a hundred miles.

CHAPTER XIII.

ON THE ROAD AGAIN.

HARRY LAWSON was again on the road. Circumstances over which he had no control seemed to be forcing him despite of his good resolutions, into the life of a tramp. He walked on during the night, for he had no place at which to stop, and, even if he had possessed the means to pay for lodging, so wrought up were his feelings that the exercise of traveling was, in a manner, a relief to him. He had no plans for the future. Indeed, he had no heart left to form plans. All the bright hopes and aspirations which had filled his heart during his stay with Dr. Blair were now gone, and there was left but one wish—to get as far as possible from the scene of those hopes and their overthrow. Oh, that some one could have told him that the hearts of his friends were still true to him; that they were yearning for his return; that the letter he had received was a forgery; that Flynn, in pursuance of his plan to get him into his power, and bend him to his will, had forged the note, using as a

copy a piece of writing stolen from the doctor's house by Perry Blake; that his intention was to have it fall into his hands while he was yet in the power of the tramps, or at least before he met the doctor, but that, defeated in this, when he had seen Harry standing alone in the town, where he was himself in disguise watching the progress of the trial, he had conceived the idea of sending it to him by a boy, telling the bearer to say, "A note from Dr. Blair;" that he had enclosed the money to give the affair an air of greater probability, and that he had watched his actions, and seen him grind the money under his foot, and take his departure from the town; that he had followed him, after first securing the discarded money, and was even now dogging his steps, ready to present himself as soon as a plausible excuse should offer. Could Harry have known all this, his wanderings would have ceased at once, and this story would come to a quick conclusion. The night was not so dark but Flynn kept Harry in sight, but took care to not let him know that he was followed. Toward morning the tramp, having satisfied himself that Harry would continue on the main road, made a detour, and, by walking rapidly and running occasionally, managed to pass him, and shortly after daylight the two met in the road, the tramp apparently coming from the opposite direction.

"Black Flynn!" exclaimed Harry, when he recognized the tramp.

"Harry Lawson!" cried the tramp, in pretended astonishment. "What brings you here? I thought you had returned to Dr. Blair's when you made your escape."

"No," said Harry, "I went directly to the trial."

"The trial? Do you know how it resulted?" asked Flynn, pretending ignorance, for it was a part of his plan to make the boy believe that he had not been at Calusa.

"They were convicted," answered Harry.

"Well, they deserved it," said Flynn. "I warned them, but they did not heed it. I did all I could for them, as it was my duty to do, but it seems I have failed. I have been compelled to be rather rough on you, my boy; but that is past, and I hope we will now be friends."

"Friends!" exclaimed Harry. "How can you have the face to talk to me of friendship, when it is by your acts, or at least in pursuance of your orders, that I am now again an outcast? I had a happy home and kind friends, and my life, for the first time, looked bright, but you have blighted it all, and made me a tramp like yourself. No! not like you," he continued, fiercely. "Let what will happen I will still be honest. I will earn my living some way, and

even if I can not, I will starve rather than become a companion of thieves."

"Well, talk as much as you please," said Flynn. "You are sore now, and of course have hard feelings toward me, but when you come to know me better you will not think so hard of me. But why did you not go back to your friends?"

"Because they have cast me off," said Harry, bitterly. "Dr. Blair sent me a note telling me not to return to his home. He sent me ten dollars, too, but I would rather starve than touch one cent of his money while he thinks me a thief. I threw it away."

"The more fool you," said Flynn. "Ten dollars are not picked up every day, and you will wish you had the money before you are many days older, I tell you. What do you intend to do?"

"I do not know. Anything to earn my living like a man."

"Where are you going?"

"That I do not know. I have no home; no friend in all the wide world."

"Yes you have, Harry Lawson Throw aside these squeamish notions and come with me. I will be your friend."

"You! You who have ruined me!" exclaimed Harry, angrily. "Why do you persist in forcing your companionship upon me. O, you may frown;

but I tell you I fear you not. You may beat me; you may even murder me; but you can never make me a vagabond like yourself. I will be honest, let what will come of it."

"Well, and what has come of your fine notions of honesty? What do people care for you, whether you are honest or not, so you do not steal from them? They will pity whining vagrancy before they will starving industry, and relieve lying thievery as soon as they will distressed honesty. You see how it is yourself. You lived an honest life with your doctor friend; were faithful and industrious, and what is the result? At the first shadow of suspicion he casts you off to starve, or to beg, or steal, he cares not which. This is the kind of friendship you will find in the career you have marked out for yourself. D—n such friendship."

"And what of Sandy Hines and Toney Bazin?" asked Harry. "Is it not better to die alone, unpitied; to die of starvation even, than to die like them upon the gallows?"

"Never you fear for Sandy Hines and Toney Bazin. They are not hung yet."

"Do you mean that they will be rescued?"

"I can not tell you, boy; but this you will find: Jesse Flynn never deserts his friends; no, not even at the foot of the scaffold; and he never forgets his enemies while they are out of the grave."

Which was true as to the last assertion, but the reader will scarcely believe the first, when he remembers the robbery of his companions, when he took their ill-gotton booty from its place of concealment and appropriated it to his own use.

"If you wish to be my friend," said Harry, "send back the watch to Dr. Blair, and clear me from the dreadful suspicion that has driven me from the home and hearts of my friends."

"That I can not do," answered Flynn. "The watch, by the manner it came into our possession, became the common property of the fraternity, and was sold, and the money used at the trial."

"And you dare to acknowledge this?"

"Why not? Suppose you should be fool enough to return and denounce me, who will believe your story? You, who are yourself suspected by your best friends of being a thief. I will swear that you came to us of your own accord, as the doctor now believes; that you did not intend to return, and were trying to make your escape when you were overtaken by the officers. What will the doctor's pretty daughter say to that, think you?"

"Don't name her with your polluted lips," cried Harry, clenching his hands in impotent rage at the unmasked villainy of his companion. "Dr. Blair may think me guilty, and Mrs. Blair may doubt me, but Carrie will never believe that I am a thief."

"Ha! ha! ha!" laughed Flynn. "You'd better go back and ask her. I think I see her now, tossing her proud head, and turning up her pretty nose, as she says, 'Go back to your friends, the tramps, Harry Lawson. I can have no companionship with a thief.'"

Harry, suffering as he was with all the mental agony consequent upon the scenes through which he had so lately passed, lost all control of himself at the stinging taunts of the tramp, and, frenzied by passion, he seized a stone which lay at his feet, and threw it at Flynn with all the strength which sudden madness could give to his arm. True to its aim, it struck the tramp in the face, and he dropped, quivering like a slaughtered bullock, into the dust.

Harry gazed upon the fallen man for a moment with a vacant stare of horror as he lay senseless at his feet, the black blood oozing from his mouth and nostrils, and then he fell upon his knees beside him, and called to him in frenzied tones to speak to him. But Flynn was beyond the power of speech. Half crazed though he was with terror and remorse, the boy heard something which made him pause and listen again. As he bent low over the senseless man he distinctly heard the ticking of a watch.

"It is the doctor's watch!" cried Harry. Half

forgetting the deed he had done in the sudden joy of this discovery, he snatched it from the inner pocket where the tramp had concealed it. It was, indeed, the missing watch. "I will return it, and then they will know I am not a thief," said he to himself, as he put it into his pocket."

This joy was but momentary. The horror of his situation burst upon him again. He did not doubt that Flynn was dead.

"Oh, I have killed him! I have killed him!" he cried. He sprang to his feet, and gazed about him, but he saw nothing except that ghastly spectacle before his mental vision wherever he turned, heard nothing but that dreadful cry in his heart, "Murder! murder! murder!" He clasped his hands over his eyes to shut out the sight, but it was still there in all its terrible ghastliness, and, yielding to the impulse of terror, he ran wildly from the spot. He had but one thought—to escape from the consequences of the dreadful though unintentional crime. He turned from the road, and, entering a wood, plunged through the underbrush, half imagining that he heard the footsteps of pursuers on his track. Thus he ran through woods and across fields, until exhausted nature could endure no more, and he fell insensible to the ground. How long he lay there no one ever knew, but the next morning a farmer's wife saw a young man, well

dressed but covered with dust, approaching the house. His cheeks were flushed, his eyes were fairly blazing in his head, and he reeled like a drunken man. He paused a moment when he saw a woman, who, frightened at his appearance, called loudly to her husband; but before the man could come to the door the youth turned and fled, with a wild cry that rang in her ears for days after, and she shuddered as she told of the terrible madman from whom she had so narrowly escaped, as she supposed.

CHAPTER XIV.

ESCAPE OF THE PRISONERS.

But let us return to the two criminals incarcerated in the jail at Calusa. Almost immediately after the trial there occurred one of those wonderful transitions of public sentiment which have become too frequent to be called phenomenal. No sooner had the excitement attending the trial died away, and the spirits of the people had begun to feel the overshadowing gloom of the approaching execution, than there transpired an entire revulsion of feeling toward the condemned men. The sadness of their fate became the all-absorbing topic of conversation, and those who had at first execrated the murderers now sympathized with them, and pitied them. Gentle women, who had shrunk from their contaminating touch upon the streets and in the court-room, visited them in their prison, and condoled with them in their "misfortune." All the delicacies of the orchard, the larder and the pantry, were brought to tempt their appetites, and all the wealth of motherly and sisterly affection was wasted upon their brutish natures.

All honor to those gentle attributes of woman's heart which find their most congenial employment in ministering to the distressed; but is it justice to suffering virtue to waste such sweetness on insensate clods, who, if they possess souls at all, have received their immortality from the fiends?

Zealous ministers of the God who has said "No murderer shall enter the kingdom of heaven" wrestled with them in prayer, and bade them hope to step from the gallows through the jewel-arched gates of the New Jerusalem. Their aged victim, unfavored by such holy ministrations, and cut off without this dernier repentance, might, perhaps, suffer an eternity of torture; but they, the shameless vagabonds, the thieves, the ravishers of virtue, the murderers of unsuspecting helplessness, might shake the filth of a lifetime of vagrancy from their garments, when the perpetration of crime was no longer possible, and grasp, with blood-stained hands, the golden harps of the redeemed, and sing, as echoes to their songs of debauchery, the anthems of the blest.

The prisoners ate the delicacies, leered at the women, permitted the prayers, listened stolidly to the exhortations, and mocked and laughed at it all when they were alone.

This maudlin sentimentality and misdirected zeal soon began to bear its legitimate fruits. Within a

week after the trial a petition for commutation of sentence was in circulation, and heading the list were the names of the jurymen who had tried the case and the judge who had passed the sentence.

Most men instinctively shrink from the consciousness that they have been, even remotely, instrumental in the death of a fellow-being, and, although a juryman may feel that he has done his duty in condemning a culprit, and in accordance with his oath could not have done otherwise, yet when an opportunity offers to shift the responsibility upon another, he is generally ready to embrace it.

The list of names grew rapidly, for people care little what they sign so that it does not affect themselves pecuniarily, and it is generally easier to pardon a monster of villainy than to raise means to relieve distressed innocence.

One day, while the petition was in circulation, and while the devout and the charitable were still laboring in their respective missions, a woman came to Calusa, who claimed to be a sister of Sandy Hines. She was neatly and modestly dressed, and professed great piety. She put up at the best hotel, and seemed to have no lack of money. She formed the acquaintance of several of the ladies who had interested themselves in behalf of the prisoners, and in their company visited the condemned men. Here

she wept tragically on the neck of her reputed brother, and counseled him to turn his thoughts from things of this lower world to the pardoning mercy of heaven. Sandy pretended to be much affected, and promised to comply. She visited the prison day after day, in company with others, until she was looked upon as a privileged visitor, and was finally admitted to see her reputed brother and his companion alone.

On one of these occasions she managed to convey to the prisoners a small saw, capable of severing the hardest iron bar, and a short crowbar, or jimmy, as it is called in burglar's parlance. The prisoners were confined at night in a cell which was thought to be secure enough to thwart the efforts of the most accomplished jail breaker, but, during the day, they were allowed the range of a kind of gallery running between the cells and the outer wall of the building. This was thought secure also, for the windows were crossed with a heavy iron network, strong enough to all appearances to resist any force that could be brought to bear upon it. The jailer, therefore, felt no fears of the escape of the prisoners. But there was one window which opened upon an unfrequented alley, and on this they contrived to find opportunity to work. Sandy had now grown very religious, and occupied a great deal of time when they were alone

in singing hymns. At least it was meant for singing, but in his deep, hoarse voice it was more like the growling of a wounded bear. This ear-splitting burlesque of song grated upon the ears of the neighbors, but it filled the hearts of the good people with joy to hear the pious roars of the beast, whom they looked upon as a brand snatched from the burning. Sandy cared nothing for the adverse criticism of musical connoisseurs, but sang away, while Toney kept time with the little ribbon of steel which cut its way insinuatingly through the metal bars. As fast as each bar of the iron lattice was severed, the track of the saw was concealed by filling the cut with chewed bread rolled in soot, which they procured from a flue which opened into the cell. When not at work Toney easily concealed the little saw about his person, and Sandy carried the "jimmy" constantly with him, hid in the lining of his coat, between his shoulders, where it fitted snugly, giving him but little inconvenience.

In the cell were two iron cots, one for each of the prisoners. One evening, after the bars of the window had been sawn through, so that a very slight pressure would break out sufficient of the iron lattice to allow a man to pass through with ease, Toney complained of feeling unwell, and lay down upon his cot an hour before dark. In this position the jailer found him

when he brought the men their supper, and he kindly offered to send out for any medicine the sick man might need. Toney declined the offer, however, and turned his face to the wall with a groan. But just before the time for locking the prisoners in their cell he arose, and, arranging his bed to look as if its occupant was still there, he took the jimmy which Sandy handed to him, left the cell, and crouched behind an angle of the wall at the further end of the gallery. When the jailor looked in Sandy was sitting on the edge of his cot as if about to lie down, and Toney was, to all appearances, occupying the same position in which he had left him an hour before.

"How is Toney?" asked the janitor, as he held the door ajar.

"Better now, I guess," replied Sandy; "he is asleep."

The kind-hearted jailor suspected nothing, but closed and locked the door, leaving the Frenchman in the gallery. About midnight Toney came to the door and rapped softly. Sandy answered from the inside. Then the Frenchman placed the jimmy in the crevice of the lock, and leaned his weight against it. With a sharp, quick snap the lock gave way, and the door was open. Sandy came forth, bringing with him the quilt from his bed, torn into strips, and fashioned into a rope. The jimmy again did its work at the grating of the

window, the sash of which was raised to allow a free circulation of air through the gallery, and Sandy lifted out the section of lattice, and set it carefully against the wall. The window was not more than twenty feet from the ground, and opened, as before said, into an unused alley, which was now dark enough to conceal their flight. The quilt they tied to the bars of the window, which still remained uncut, and in five minutes from the time the door was broken, the prisoners were free.

The next morning the jailer found the broken lock, the parted bars and an empty cell. The prisoners had forestalled the petition, and had departed. The charitable ladies called upon the reputed sister of Hines to inform her of his escape, and found that she, too, had disappeared.

Then the people shook their heads sagely, and said, "I told you so."

CHAPTER XV.

PLOTTING FOR REVENGE.

THE first thought of the tramps after their escape was of the money they had buried in the thicket, and they accordingly fled in that direction. It was day-break when they came in sight of the woods. But little conversation had passed between them during their flight, but now Toney said:

"Do you tink ze money is tare?"

"Of course it is," answered Sandy. "Didn't I wrap it up so that the water couldn't hurt it? and who'd think of lookin' there for money?"

During the whole time of their journey Sandy had been pondering. Eleven hundred and fifty dollars was a large sum for one man in his condition, but divided by two it looked so small that he kept wishing that he might have it all. This wish gradually grew into a determination to possess it, as he drew nearer and nearer to the coveted treasure. He carried a stout stick, which he had picked up to aid him in walking, and he kept clutching it nervously with

his hand, as murderous thoughts passed through his mind.

At length they reached the spot. There was no indication that anything had been disturbed, or even that the spot had been visited since they had concealed their ill-gotten plunder. The two men paused to listen. There was no sound of pursuit. Both were trembling, but from very different causes—the Frenchman from eagerness to grasp his treasure, and Sandy from the murderous thoughts within him. Satisfied that there was no one near, Sandy said, turning to the place where they had buried the money:

"There it is. Dig it up."

The Frenchman was only too ready to begin. He fell upon his knees and began to scratch away the earth. Sandy's eyes gleamed like those of a maniac, and had Toney looked up from his work he would have cried out with terror, for over his head was lifted the club, swinging in a swift circle through air. He saw it not, however, for his eyes were fixed upon the earth. With a dull sickening thud the club descended upon the head of the unsuspicious wretch, crushing it like an egg-shell. He fell forward with his face in the pile of earth he had torn up, a convulsive tremor ran through his limbs, and then he lay still in death. Sandy gazed for a moment upon his victim.

"There, d—n you, that settles you," he said. "Now, the money is all mine. I will leave this cursed country and go to New York. I'm tired of this tramp business, anyhow. With 'leven hundred and fifty dollars a man can have a lot of fun in New York. D—n this Black Flynn. I'll not be his slave any longer. I'll go where I can be my own boss."

He spurned the body brutally aside with his foot, and, bending down, began to dig for the money. He soon reached the bottom of the excavation he had previously made, but he found no money. He sprang to his feet and gazed about him with a bewildered stare, then fell again upon his knees and tore wildly into the yielding soil. It was of no avail.

"It's gone," he howled. "It's gone! It's gone!"

He sprang to his feet again and stamped upon the ground and tore his hair in frenzy. Then his eyes fell upon the ghastly object at his feet, and realizing the uselessness of the terrible crime he had committed, he fled from the place with a howl of mingled rage and terror.

Days after, the half-decayed and mutilated body of the wretched Frenchman was found and recognized as that of one of the objects of misplaced sympathy of the inhabitants of Calusa, and people said, "Here is where they hid the money they took from their victim. One ruffian has killed the other and fled with the wages of their crime."

Sandy Hines continued his flight toward the east, avoiding the public roads and keeping in the woods and along the fences, until evening, when he entered a by-road that seemed to wind about and lead nowhere in particular. The strip of grass growing along its center, between the wheel tracks, indicated that it was but little used, and would probably lead to some retired farm house, which the tramp might approach with safety and get something to eat, for he was now weak from hunger, not having dared to stop for food during the day. Just before sundown he came to a small house, far from the main road, and almost hidden by surrounding woods. He approached the open door and looked in. At first he thought that there was no one in the room, although he could hear some one moving about in a room back of this, which was used as a kitchen. As he was about to knock upon the open door to attract the attention of this person, his glance fell upon a bed in one corner of the room, and he could scarcely suppress a cry of astonishment. There, with one arm thrown above his head, his eyes closed, and his breath coming and going with the regularity and softness of refreshing sleep, lay Harry Lawson. He was thin and pale, as if just recovering from a severe illness, yet the tramp recognized him at once. Sandy's first thought was of flight, but before he could turn away the kitchen

door opened softly and an old woman came into the room. She started and appeared half frightened when she saw the tramp, but motioning toward the bed, she put her fingers upon her lips and came to the door. Sandy stepped outside, beyond the sight of the sleeping youth should he awake, and made known his request after the usual fashion of such gentry. The kind-hearted old woman listened to and believed his pitiful story of destitution, and, leading the way around the house in order not to disturb the sleeper, she bade him sit down on a bench by the back door of the kitchen, and gave him food.

"Who's that?" asked Sandy, motioning over his shoulder toward the sleeper, at the same time suppressing his voice so as not to awake him; a thing he was anxious not to do.

"It's a poor boy that my old man found more'n a week ago lyin' in a fence corner down the lane. He was crazy as a loon with fever, and we carried him to the house and put him to bed. He wouldn't stay there at first, though, and jumped up and tried to run away. He said some one was a follerin' him and wantin' to take him, and he called himself a murderer and kept cryin' out that he wasn't a thief, and talked about a doctor and a watch and a tramp and all sorts of nonsense."

"Did you send for a doctor?" asked Sandy—for he was anxious to know if others besides this old couple knew that Harry was here.

"Yes," said the garrulous but kind-hearted old woman. "There's a yarb doctor lives across the woods yonder. We had him, and he dosed the boy up with teas and stuff, and the fever went down so he'd lay in bed without holdin', but he kept on a talkin' and cryin' just like a crazy person."

"Didn't he call no names, so's you could tell who he is?" asked Sandy.

"Oh, he called a lot of names, but I couldn't make head nor tail of what he said. Sometimes he'd talk about a court and a watch, as I said, and then he'd grow quiet-like, and talk about a woman he called Emma, or Sary, or Carrie, or some such name; his sister, as like as not, though I guess the most of it was fever-crazy."

"What are you goin' to do with him?"

"Why, what should we do with him, man, but keep the poor fellow till he gits well, as I hope he will. He's at hisself now—got better about noon to-day—but he's too weak to talk, and I thought I wouldn't bother him with questions just yit. But there comes my old man now."

Sandy had no wish to meet the man just then, so he said something about having a good ways to go,

and walked off eating the food which the kind-hearted old lady had given him.

"Harry Lawson," said he to himself, as he walked along. "How did he come here? It must be fifty miles, at least, to Calusa; and then, a comin' here crazy! I'll bet Black Flynn has had a finger in this pie somehow. Well, it's lucky I saw him before I woke him up. He might have knowed me and put the cops after me. I owe him one, though, for gettin' me into that scrape, and I'll pay it, too, if I ever have a chance."

So muttering he continued his way, and slept that night by the side of a fence several miles from the farm house where Harry lay, slowly recovering from the effects of the fever which had prostrated him.

Having, on escaping from his prison, decided to leave the country, Sandy determined to carry out his intention, even though he had lost the money with which he had expected to have what he called "lots of fun." He continued his way, traveling mostly at night and hiding during the day, stealing food when he could, but rarely venturing to beg except at out of the way places, until he passed the borders of Indiana and entered Ohio. Here he felt himself more safe, and occasionally approached a house, but was still suspicious of danger, and avoided the towns and villages.

One day while walking along the main road, which he now ventured to travel occasionally, he saw a buggy approaching, and, as was usual with him since his escape, he hid at the side of the road to let it pass. When it came opposite he saw that it contained two men, one an elderly gentleman with gray whiskers and hair, who was an entire stranger, but at sight of the other Sandy started with surprise and fear.

"Brown, the detective, by ——," he growled through his set teeth. "He is after me," and he crouched low behind the fence. But he was not discovered, and the men drove rapidly by.

"That was a close shave," said Sandy when they passed out of sight. "That infernal detective is dogging me down. What could have put him on my track? I'm not safe here. I'll go to Cincinnati and hide there till this thing blows over. If they're huntin' me in the country, I'll try the city." So he turned his face toward Cincinnati and proceeded on his way, redoubling his caution, until he at times absolutely suffered for want of food, in his fear of being discovered and apprehended. But as the reader is already aware, the detective and his companion, Mr. Conover, were not hunting Sandy Hines, although they had learned through the papers of his escape. It was Harry Lawson whom they were seeking. Harry Lawson, who, all unconscious of the exertions

being made in his behalf, lay at the little secluded farm house within fifty miles of his anxious friends, the doctor's family.

For days the detective and Mr. Conover had driven over the country in search of the boy; three times they had fancied themselves on his track, but on coming up with the person they were pursuing, found that it was one whom they did not know. They had abandoned what seemed now to be a useless search, and were on their way back to Calusa, when they were seen by the tramp, whose guilty conscience caused him to fancy that he was the object of their pursuit.

Sandy Hines reached Cincinnati, and not daring to appear openly upon the streets, he entered the city in the night. He was well acquainted there and knew all its dens of infamy and places of concealment, so he selected a house kept by an old acquaintance and located near the river.

It appeared that he was to continually meet with surprises, for the first man he saw at this place was Black Flynn. Flynn's head was bandaged, his face was terribly scarred, and his nose broken and permanently deformed, but Sandy recognized him at once.

"How did you come here and what's the matter with your face?" exclaimed Sandy, as soon as they met.

"I came here because I wished to!" replied Flynn, savagely, "and my face was beaten to this shape by that cursed boy, Harry Lawson."

"Harry Lawson!" cried Sandy, "That boy beat you up in this way?"

"Hush!" said Flynn. "We will be overheard. Let us go into one of these empty stalls and sit down."

The room on one side was divided into stalls, as Flynn called them, and ordering brandy, he led the way to one at a distance from the bar about which the inmates were collected. When they were seated, and both had drunk, Sandy said:

"Come, tell us all about it. How could that boy beat you up so?"

"With a stone, when I was off my guard," answered Flynn. But let me ever meet him again, and he may look his last on the sun. I'll have his heart's blood for this."

"But how did it happen?" asked Sandy.

Flynn related as much of the affair as he wished his companion to know. The reader is familiar with the story up to the point where Harry, dazed with terror at the supposed result of his momentary passion, had fled from the spot, leaving the tramp apparently lifeless in the road. Flynn came to his senses after a time, and, before any one passed that way, he was able to stagger away and find a spring in the woods, where he

bathed his wounds and further revived himself. Not wishing to be seen in that neighborhood in his battered condition, he had waited until night, and then, proceeding to the nearest railroad station, had taken the first train to Cincinnati, where he hoped to be able to patch up his dilapidated countenance. But in spite of all the skill which money could command his face was deformed for life, and his heart was full of bitter curses and thoughts of vengeance on the boy whose act had made him the hideous object which Sandy, brutal as he was, almost pitied as he beheld. There was a moment of silence between the two, during which Sandy was trying to decide in his mind whether he should tell Flynn that he had discovered the boy at the farm house, and he was still undecided when Flynn gave him a sudden start, which drove the boy out of his mind, by asking:

"Where's Toney?"

Flynn was not looking at him when he asked this question, or the sudden pallor which spread over Sandy's face would have caused him to suspect something of the dreadful deed committed in that lonely wood. The latter recovered his composure in an instant, however, and replied:

"Don't know. Gone east, I guess."

"How did you get out of jail?" asked Flynn.

Sandy related the circumstances as the reader already knows them.

"I knew Mag would do the work if any one could," said Flynn. "I set it up as soon as I found that you were gone up. She's worth her weight in gold in a case like this. Did she play the pious dodge?"

"You bet."

"Well, that's the safest. It always takes them. A few tears and sniffles, and plenty of prayers, and groans, and amens. What fools people are, anyway."

"Do you know what's become of the boy?" asked Sandy.

"No! I wish I did. I'd soon settle him. Just think of having to carry this scarred face and this crooked nose all my life. Why the women all turn away from me with a shudder, and the very dogs snarl at me as I pass. I'd give a thousand dollars to get hold of him."

"Whew! A thousand dollars!" cried Sandy. "Have you found a gold mine?"

"I mean I would if I had it," said Flynn, seeing that he was going too far, for he feared his companion might suspect his agency in the disappearance of the old man's money, the greater part of which was still in his possession. He had been wondering ever since he had met Sandy if he had yet discovered his loss, but dared not say anything about it.

"Perhaps he's gone back to the doctor's," said Sandy, feeling his way toward the revelation he had not yet decided to make.

"No, he has not," answered Flynn. "Only yesterday I saw a notice in the paper asking him to return, and offering five hundred dollars to any one who would give information leading to his discovery."

"That would be a good thing, if a feller only knowed where he was," said Sandy.

"Do you suppose I would tell them if I knew? What would their paltry five hundred dollars be to me, compared with the satisfaction of getting the young viper into my power and paying him for what he has done to me? O, I'll find him yet, without their reward, and when I do I'll even up the score if I die for it."

This decided Sandy. To tell Flynn what he had discovered would be to put him on the track of the boy, and thus cause him to lose the reward, which he had determined to win. But how should he manage to communicate with Harry's friends without betraying himself. This puzzled him for a time, but at length a happy thought came to him, and he asked Flynn:

"Where's Mag?"

"She's at Mother Sligo's, on —th street," answered Flynn. "I saw her yesterday. But why do you ask?"

"O, I thought I'd like to see her; that's all!" said Sandy.

This was his plan. To communicate with the doctor by means of the woman who has already figured in these pages as instrumental in the escape of the murderers. But little more passed between the two men, and at length Flynn rose to go.

"Have you any money?" asked Sandy. "I'm dead broke."

"I have a little. I'll divide with you," said Flynn, and giving his companion a five dollar bill, he left the room.

Sandy waited until he thought that his late companion was out of sight, and then, after taking another drink at the bar, he also left the den and proceeded toward —th street. Sandy was well acquainted with the house to which he was going, and had no difficulty in finding the woman he wished to see. When, however, he asked her to act as a means of communication between himself and Dr. Blair she objected, because she herself would be in danger of arrest, if recognized, for the part she had taken in the escape of the prisoners. She promised at length to find a woman who would have no such risk to run, if Sandy would agree to divide the reward. This the tramp at first refused to do, offering to give the woman a hundred dollars; but she was firm, and he consented at last, and agreed to meet her and the woman she was to select the next day, and give full directions about the location of the house where he had found Harry.

When Sandy left Mother Sligo's he felt sure of at least half the reward offered for the discovery of the boy; but if he could have known that the man sauntering down the opposite side of the street, when he emerged from the house, was Black Flynn, he might have had some misgivings. After leaving the saloon Flynn had called to mind some words and actions of his companion which led him to ponder, and putting this and that together, he had begun to suspect that perhaps the tramp knew more of Harry's whereabouts than he cared to disclose. "If he does know where he is he will try to get Mag to help him secure the reward," said he to himself. So he had loitered near the door, and when Sandy came out he had followed him. When he saw him enter Mother Sligo's den he was almost confirmed in his suspicion, and resolved to watch closely further developments. So when Sandy called at the house again, next day, Flynn entered almost immediately after him, and, calling for the woman who kept the den, he asked her if there was any way in which he could overhear the conversation between Sandy and the woman Mag. Mother Sligo at first thought not, but when Flynn slipped a ten dollar bill into her hand she suddenly remembered that if he would conceal himself in a room adjoining he could listen through the keyhole. The old hag pointed out the

way to this room, and Flynn stole softly into it. He first applied his eye to the keyhole, but could see no one. He applied his ear next and heard the sound of voices. Listening intently he discovered that there were three persons in the room. The voices of Sandy and Mag he recognized, but the other was that of a strange woman. The conversation was carried on in low tones, yet Flynn heard every word, and soon learned that Sandy had found the boy, and was now giving directions to the strange woman, which information she was to impart to Dr. Blair for the offered reward. He waited long enough to be put in possession of their plan of procedure, which the reader will discover in due time, and then left the house. He placed himself on the opposite side of the street, however, and waited until he saw Sandy and the woman, whom he did not recognize, come out and pass down the street together. Then he hastened to a small, dingy shop in one of the lower streets of the city, and in a few minutes came out with a bundle under his arm, and proceeded to the house at which he had been stopping.

On a westward bound train which left the city that night were two passengers, unknown to each other, yet bound upon much the same mission. One was a woman about thirty years old, modestly dressed in black, and having every outward appearance of re-

spectability. The other was a tall man in the dress of a farmer or drover, with heavy black whiskers and long black hair. But a close observer would have noticed an ugly scar, scarcely healed, extending from his right eye across his cheek, and would have discovered that his nose was scarred and all awry, as if it had received a heavy blow that had forever destroyed its symmetry. The reader, who has seen him since Harry put his mark upon him, would have recognized Black Flynn, in spite of his false hair and beard, but one who only remembered the bold, handsome face of the tramp, as we first knew him, would have passed him by as a stranger. The woman continued on the train until it reached the town of Calusa, but the man had left it at a small station fifty miles further east.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE FRUITLESS SEARCH.

MR. CONOVER and the detective came back to Dr. Blair's without having learned anything of Harry. The doctor's notices and telegrams had accomplished no more. Mr. Conover returned to the east to attend to some business which imperatively demanded his attention, promising, however, to return at an early day, for he had not given up all hope of finding Harry. Dr. Blair, however, was much disheartened.

"I fear he has fallen in with the tramps again, and will remain with them," he said.

"He will never be a tramp," said Carrie, decidedly.

"Carrie is right," said Mrs. Blair. "Harry will never be a tramp. I can not solve the mystery of his disappearance, but I am sure that, of his own choice, he will never lead such a life. I fear that the tramps have been instrumental in his disappearance, but, if he is with them, it is as a prisoner."

"That is not at all probable," said the doctor. "It was quite possible for them to keep him for a time,

while their haunt in the big swamp was unknown, but it is not likely that they have many such places of concealment; besides, it is seldom that they are banded together in such numbers. They are usually wandering about the country, singly, or in twos or threes, and it would be impossible to keep the boy with them against his will."

"Yet I can not but fear that some evil has befallen him at their hands," said Mrs. Blair.

"Do you think they would murder him?" asked Carrie.

"No, no, my child," said Mrs. Blair. "Not so bad as that, I hope."

Yet Mrs. Blair did fear that very thing, although she was loth to admit it, even to herself. Since the escape of the murderers, she had feared that the boy might have been killed, either by them or their friends, in revenge for the part he had taken against them. But this fear she endeavored to conceal from her daughter.

As days passed on and nothing was heard of Harry, hope died out of their hearts, and they mourned for him almost as for one dead. Carrie's cheeks grew pale, and she moved listlessly about the house entirely unlike the light-hearted girl of a few weeks before. Her music was almost neglected, and Mrs. Blair had heard her sing but one song since Harry

had left them so mysteriously, and that was sad, and burdened with tears.

SONG.

Oh, heart, we were glad when we saw in our dream
The white wings of hope as she flew;
Her pinions aglow with the sun, and the gleam
Of her eyes like the dawn on the dew.
And we thought she would fly like a bird to its nest;
And dwell with us ever to nestle and sing;
Oh, heart, we were dreaming, she never can rest,
For sorrow, the fowler, has wounded her breast,
And she flies like a shelterless thing.

Oh, heart, we are weary of waiting in vain,
As castaways wait in despair;
To find what they fancy a sail on the main
Is the wing of the albatross there,
While the tempest flies on, and the billows are white,
As they dash into foam on the breakers alee.
Oh, heart, must we watch through the gloom of the night,
Till hope, like the albatross, weary of flight,
Sinks into the islandless sea?

One day, about two weeks after Harry's disappearance, and shortly after Mr. Conover left for the east, Dr. Blair received the following note:

DR. BLAIR:—You can learn something concerning the young man, Harry Lawson, by calling at the Gurney House in Calusa, and inquiring for the subscriber. MRS. MARY BARTLOW.

Not knowing what the nature of the promised information might be, and not wishing to give his family unnecessary anxiety, the doctor said nothing of this letter to either his wife or daughter, but pro-

ceeded at once to the place indicated. He inquired for the woman whose name was signed to the note, and was shown at once to her room. On introducing himself, he said:

"I infer from your note that you can give me some information concerning one for whose fate I am very anxious. Do you know where he is?"

"No," said the woman; "I do not know exactly where to find him. The truth is that the affair does not concern myself at all. A cousin of mine saw your advertisement offering a reward for the recovery of the boy, and is confident that he has seen him within a few days, and can produce him when required. When he gave me this information I was very anxious to have him come to you at once and relieve your anxiety, but I am ashamed to say that he is very avaricious, and seeing a chance to realize pecuniary benefit from the thing, he refuses to assist in the matter unless he is sure of the reward. It was only through anxiety to relieve your distress that I consented to come here, for, I assure you, if it were left to myself I would not think of demanding pay for doing what is plainly a duty. But my cousin would not give me any information concerning the young man until I promised to see you and get positive assurance that he will receive the reward you have offered."

"Well, what further assurance does he want?" asked Dr. Blair.

"He says it will be sufficient if you will personally agree to pay me the five hundred dollars as soon as you are conducted to the place where the boy now is, and are satisfied that he is there."

"But how did your cousin find him? Was he looking for him in order to earn the reward?"

"No, not that exactly; but my cousin is a sort of itinerant peddler, and found the person, whom he believes to be Harry Lawson, while pursuing his calling through the country."

"Is he near here? Is he in the State?"

"My cousin told me to answer no questions until the reward was secured?"

"Your cousin is very suspicious. You can at least tell me if the boy is well."

"He has been very ill, but has nearly recovered."

"Ill!" exclaimed the doctor. "Why did I not think of that? That accounts for the fact that we have heard nothing from him. Poor fellow. Is he in good hands?"

"I do not know. My cousin did not say. He only said that you could find the boy if you would pay the reward."

"Well, when will this cousin of yours condescend to give me this information?"

"I am to conduct you to the place at once if you agree to pay the money as soon as you meet the boy."

"But you said you did not know where he was. How then can you take me to him, even if I promise you the money?"

"I said not exactly! I can find the place, perhaps, if you agree. You will have nothing to lose. Remember the money is to be paid when you meet the boy."

"But why does not this cousin of yours come himself, since he would be able to conduct me to the place without the delay of searching for it?"

"That I do not know. Nor need it concern either you or me. I suppose he has his own reasons for the course he has taken. Provided you find the boy you have no reason to complain."

"Certainly not," said the doctor, who, from the first, had suspected that this man had some good reason for wishing to remain unknown, and that the woman was not so disinterested in the matter as she pretended. But he cared nothing for this, provided he could find Harry Lawson. He therefore agreed to accompany the woman at once. He asked her if they were to travel far. The woman declined to answer the question. "Will we travel by rail, or by private conveyance?" he asked.

"Partly by one way, partly by the other," was the reply.

"But how will I know how to provide for my journey if I am not to know the distance nor anything concerning it?" asked the doctor.

The woman hesitated a moment. She had not thought of this. Her object was to get the doctor away from Calusa without allowing him to communicate with his friends in town. At length she said:

"I will tell you this much. You will not be gone more than two days. We will take the first train going east, and I will tell you where we will leave the cars after we have started."

"But why all this secrecy?" asked the doctor, beginning to grow suspicious.

"It is my cousin's orders," was the reply.

Dr. Blair desired to take either the detective (Brown) or Mr. Rickard with him, but the woman informed him that he must go with her alone or not at all.

"You can write to your family if you wish," said she, "and tell them how long you will be absent. Tell them your business, too, if you think best, but if you desire to find the boy you must hold no communication with any one here concerning your journey."

Dr. Blair was not deceived by the woman's pre-

tended disinterestedness in the matter. He suspected something near the truth at once. This cousin was either a myth, or evidently a criminal, who did not wish to run the risk of detection.

"One of the tramps, no doubt," thought he, "who has discovered the boy and wishes to receive the reward, yet fears to appear in person. Well, there can be no personal danger to myself. I will go."

He informed the woman of his determination, and, after giving her his promise that he would not communicate the fact to any one at Calusa, he left the room to provide himself with the money to pay the reward, and to write to his family, explaining his absence. In an hour after they were on the train, when the woman told him where they were to stop.

"So near?" said he. "How could we have missed him in our search?"

"We will have to go a few miles into the country," said the woman. "You will hire a carriage at the place where we leave the cars, and in a few hours we will be at our destination."

Let us now return to Flynn. The reader will remember that he left the cars the night before, at the place to which Dr. Blair and the woman who had called herself Mrs. Bartlow, were proceeding. He did not wait for morning, but set out at once for the secluded farm-house where Harry had been discovered

by Sandy Hines. The directions he had overheard had been very explicit and easily followed, for both he and Hines were well acquainted with the country, and knew every highway and byway in the vicinity. It was morning when he reached the place, and, as he stealthily approached the house, he saw the old man come forth and proceed toward the fields to his work. It was not his intention to go at once to the house, but to reconnoiter without being discovered, and to watch for a favorable opportunity to wreak his vengeance upon the defenseless boy. Revenge was burning in his heart, and the demon of murder was whispering in his ear. Nor was this to be wondered at in a man of his character. Although a professional tramp, he was both ambitious and vain. His ambition was to be a ruler among his fellows—to be a leader in the new order of things which he hoped to see inaugurated, and he was vain of his personal appearance—had been, rather, for now he was a monster of ugliness. Is it any wonder that one of his disposition should nurse the passion of vengeance in his heart, and watch like a hungry tiger for an opportunity to destroy the youth who had disfigured him for life?

He concealed himself in a thicket near the house and watched hour after hour for a sight of his intended victim, but Harry Lawson did not appear.

"Can it be that he is not yet able to be out of bed?" he asked himself. "It may be. Well, all the better. I will wait till night, and then steal up to the house and see. If he is still in bed, I will shoot him as he lies. Still, I would like to have him know, before he dies, that he owes his death to me. The other parties will not probably be here before to-morrow. Then they will find him—well, they will be welcome to him then."

But Flynn found an opportunity to approach the house before night. He saw the old lady come out of the door and proceed toward the stable, which stood at some distance from the house. "Now is my chance," thought he, as he left his concealment and stole cautiously toward the open door. He reached it without discovery and looked in. The room was empty. In one corner stood the bed on which Harry had lain when he was discovered by Sandy, but it was unoccupied.

"Has he gone?" thought Flynn.

Rendered desperate by the thought of his disappointment, he boldly entered the house. He passed through the front room and opened the kitchen door. No one there. There was a small room adjoining the one he had first entered. Into this he looked. It was a sleeping room, containing one bed, but, like the other, unoccupied.

"He has gone," said he to himself. "I am too late. I will wait until the old woman returns, and then I will ask her. I may get upon his track." But at this moment he heard a sound which startled him. It was the rattle of approaching wheels. Glancing hastily down the lane he saw a carriage.

"The other party," he thought. "I must hide again."

It was too late to seek his former place of concealment, for he would certainly be seen by the occupants of the carriage before he could reach the thicket; so, looking hurriedly about him, he saw that a small garden lay on one side of the house, and that a row of currant bushes lined the fence. Into this garden he ran, and was safely concealed within a few yards of the door before the carriage reached the house. No one had discovered him. He recognized Dr. Blair, who at once sprang out and walked hurriedly to the door. The woman who accompanied him still remained in the carriage. The farmer's wife had returned by this time, and met the doctor at the threshold. The latter made known his business at once.

"He is gone," said the old woman.

"Gone!" exclaimed the doctor. "When? How?"

"He went last night," said she. "We didn't know nothin' about it till mornin'. Then we found

a piece of paper on his bed. I'll show it to you." She brought the paper, and Dr. Blair read:

MY KIND FRIEND:—I thank you from my heart for the kindness you have shown me, and wish that I had money to pay you for the expense you have been to on my account. ("As if we cared for that," interrupted the old woman. The doctor read on:) I will pay you some day, if I live. But I must leave you. I can give you no reason; you may know some day, and then you will regret that you ever brought me back to life. ("Yes, the poor feller was about gone, that's a fact," said the old woman.) Why did you not let me die?" (read the doctor.) "Yet I am grateful for your efforts to save my wretched life, and will always remember your kindness to one who is FRIENDLESS.

"How beautiful it all sounds when you read it," said the old woman. "My old man is a master hand at print, but he can't make much of writin', and he had to spell it out, so it didn't sound half like it does now."

Dr. Blair recognized Harry's writing at once.

"Have you no clue?" he asked.

"How?"

"Have you no idea which way he went?"

"None in the world."

"Do you know what time in the night he went?"

"No; we didn't miss him till mornin'."

"Do you think he had any money?"

"Not a cent; but he had a big watch. It was yaller like gold; but my old man said 'twas brass as like as not."

"A watch! Did he take it with him?"

"Yes. It was layin' on the mantlepiece last night, but it was gone this mornin'."

"A watch," repeated the doctor to himself. "A gold watch! Can it be possible? But no, I will not believe it. No thief could write such a letter as that. There is some mystery here which time alone can unravel; yet"—

"What was you a sayin'?" asked the old woman.

"Nothing," answered the doctor. "That is, nothing of importance. But how did this boy come here? I heard he was sick. Had he recovered?"

The old woman repeated the story of Harry's illness much as the reader has heard it before.

"Had he fully recovered?" asked the doctor.

"Hey?"

"Was he entirely well?"

"No, not quite. But he was stronger, and seemed quite peert yesterday."

"Did he say nothing of his friends during his convalescence?"

"Which?"

"Did he speak of his friends after he began to get well?"

"No, scarcely a word. He did say somethin' about a doctor, once; but I didn't understand him quite."

"Do you think he could travel far in his present condition?"

"I don't think he could go far afoot."

The doctor was puzzled. The boy had eluded him again, and he knew not which way to turn. He returned to the carriage, where his companion was still sitting. She had overheard the conversation, and explanations were unnecessary. There was but one thing to do now: to return home, put the detective on the track, and try to overtake him. Most men would have abandoned the matter here; but Dr. Blair loved Harry almost as a son, and he determined to continue the search while there was the slightest chance of finding him, for he felt assured that some misunderstanding existed, or the boy would not thus try to elude his friends. It was necessary to return toward the railroad station at once in order to reach it in time for the westward-bound train. He accordingly entered the carriage and drove rapidly away, unmindful of the old lady's request that he should wait and see her "old man," who would be in soon from the field.

Flynn waited until the farmer's wife entered the house, and then, leaving his concealment, he pursued the same direction taken by the carriage.

"I'll find him yet," he muttered. "I'll find him yet, if I have to spend my life in the search. The world is not big enough to hold us both."

CHAPTER XVII.

HARRY A FUGITIVE.

HARRY LAWSON remembered nothing from the time he fell from exhaustion, while fleeing from the scene of the homicide—as he supposed—until he awoke from his delirium at the house of the kind old couple who had snatched him, as it were, from the grave. When his reason came back he found himself lying helpless upon the bed in a strange room, and a strange face bending above him. His first question was:

"Where am I? What has happened?"

"You're here," replied the old woman; which information did not enlighten him to any great extent.

"What is the matter? Have I been sick?" he asked.

"Yes," was the reply, "you've been mighty sick. Nigh unto death's door, I reckon, but you're better now, and you'll git well, I guess, if you don't worry too much. You've been as crazy as a bed-bug, and a carryin' on like anything, but it's all over now. Who are you, my boy? Must we send your people word?"

Harry did not answer at once. His mind flew back over the events of the days immediately preceding his illness, and, springing into startling distinctness, came the memory of his terrible crime. He shuddered and groaned aloud, as he buried his face in his pillow.

"What's the matter now?" asked the kind-hearted old lady. "Do you feel worse?"

"No! no!" said Harry through the sobs that shook his frame.

"There, there! Poor boy! poor boy!" said the old woman, soothingly laying her wrinkled hand gently upon his head.

There was something in the touch of that hand which made Harry's heart leap and carried his mind back to the time when another hand, not old and wrinkled like this, but beautiful even in its pallor, had been laid upon his head, and the words yet rang in his ears, "Father in heaven protect my poor orphan boy." His heart was full and ready to burst, and this simple act of motherly kindness thrilled to his inmost being, and he seized the hand of the kind old creature and pressed it to his lips.

"There, there; poor boy! Don't, now!" said she, gently, as she turned away her face to hide her tears. "We'll not talk any more. Go to sleep now; it'll do you good," and she stole softly from the room.

But Harry did not go to sleep. He felt in his heart that the blessings of innocent repose were never more to be his. The same terrible cry which had hounded him in his mad flight again rang in his ears. "Murderer! murderer! murderer!" He longed to recall the old woman and question her. He wanted to ask if the body had been discovered; whom they suspected of the murder; but he dared not do it. His eyes wandered restlessly about the room and fell at length upon the doctor's watch, which lay upon the shelf where his new friends had placed it when they took it from his pocket. It was silent now, for it had not been wound since it came into his possession, and he shuddered as he thought that the last hand which had turned its key was now rigid in death—made so by his own rash act.

"Why did I not endure his taunts," he said to himself. "Why did I yield to my passions and by one impulsive act render my whole life wretched. I will return the doctor's watch to him, but he must never know where I am. As soon as my strength will permit I must be gone. They are, no doubt, hunting for me to arrest me, and it is strange that they have not yet found me. Perhaps they have found me," he thought with a shudder, "and are only waiting till I am well enough to be removed. I must know something about it. I *will* ask, let the consequence be what it may.

So when the old woman again came into the room Harry said:

"Have you a late paper that I can see?"

"Laws no," said she. "We can't afford to take a paper. They're too costive. There's an old Bangtown *Slasher* here somewhere, that my old man borrowed of Sam. Peters to see about the spring election, but I don't know where it is now."

"Have you heard of anything happening lately—any—any—accident—or—or anything like that?"

"No, nothin', only Si. Philips a gittin' his leg broke. That happened last week. Betsy Flanders told me about that. You see he was a choppin' on a tree and"—

"No, I don't mean that," said Harry. "Nothing else? Nothing at a distance?"

"Laws sake alive! How'd we know about anything away off. We never goes to town only when we're obleeged to, and that ain't more'n once a month. But what's put that in your head?"

Harry did not reply.

"Has anyone been inquiring for me?" he asked at length.

"Nobody, only some of the nigh neighbors. Betsy Flanders were here, and Dr. Ginsang were here to see you two or three times."

"I mean has there been any stranger here?"

"No. Yes; now I think of it, there were a poor man here yisterday who had lost his wife, and was hungry, and sick, and out of work, and was agoin' to some place away off, I've forgot where, and he wanted a bite to eat, and he asked who you were, and—"

"Did you tell him?" asked Harry, anxiously.

"Laws sakes alive! How'd I tell him when I didn't know, and don't know yit for that matter. Was you lookin' for some one?"

"No," replied Harry, and he turned his face to the wall and ceased to talk.

Harry saw but little of the old farmer, for he was constantly at work during the day, and at night he went to bed as soon as it was dark. The old lady, however, was his constant companion, and did everything in her power to make him comfortable. She prepared various dainties to tempt his appetite, and once she persuaded a neighbor's boy to kill a squirrel for him, and Harry thought he had never tasted anything half so delicious. Days passed on, and he slowly regained his strength. Nearly two weeks had passed since the kind old couple had carried him, crazed with fever, into their house, and he was almost well. He took all the exercise his strength would permit, for he longed to be away, and only waited till his limbs were strong enough to bear him

on his journey. Not but that he could have been well contented here, for he had been so kindly treated by the farmer and his wife that it had begun to appear like home to him, but that dreadful terror was ever behind him, and he felt as if there was no peace, no safety, but in flight.

At length he felt himself sufficiently recovered to venture on his way again, and, accordingly, he left the house of his kind friends in the night, as already stated, leaving the note which Dr. Blair had read. It was early in the night when he started, at first almost aimlessly but at last with the purpose of reaching Cincinnati. He did not doubt that the officers of justice were on his track. At times he was almost determined to give himself up and end the anguish of suspense and remorse that was driving him, a friendless wanderer, through the country. But then he thought of the long, weary months in prison, the terror of the public trial, the horrors of imprisonment for life, or, it might be, death upon the scaffold, and he fled blindly on his way like one followed by the avenger of blood. He still retained possession of the doctor's watch, for he dared not approach a railroad station to express it to its owner for fear of detection and arrest for the murder of the tramp.

When morning dawned he found himself tired, hungry and penniless. Just as the sun was rising he

came to a small grove by the side of the road, and, entering it, he sat down upon a log to rest.

"What shall I do?" he asked himself. "I can neither beg nor steal. Must I die of hunger and exhaustion in a land overflowing with plenty? I might get work, if I only dared to stop. But no, I must go on, not daring to pause until I am so far away that my pursuers can not overtake me. But will I ever be safe? May I not be apprehended when I least expect it? I am a criminal—a murderer in the sight of the law, though, God knows, I did not intend to kill the man. Yet that would not save me. The arm of the law is long, and I have read that murderers never escape. Where now are all my hopes? Where now is all my ambition? I had planned for myself a life of honor and usefulness. I had pictured to myself a home of pleasure and comfort. What am I now? A wretched outcast from society, a fugitive from justice, fleeing through the country like an escaped felon. And what will be the end? Can I ever shake off this terrible weight from my heart and brain? Shall I ever hope again? Must remorse ever be my companion, poisoning every pleasure, turning every cup of happiness to bitternes? Must I go, like a miserable vagabond through the world, a skulking coward, with this ghastly terror ever at my heels? Why did they, in their mistaken kindness, parry the

blow which death in pity aimed at my breaking heart? Oh! that I had the courage to go at once and meet my fate and end this misery. But I can not!" He threw himself prone upon the grass and buried his face in his hands. "Oh, mother! mother!" he cried. "If the dead can love the living; if heaven listens to the prayers of love; pray for me, again, your dying prayer: 'Father in heaven protect my poor orphan boy.'"

Sobbing like a child he lay until exhausted nature ceased to struggle with grief, and pitying sleep came and soothed his sorrow into sweet forgetfulness.

The sun rose above the tree-tops and threw its soft, mellow light upon him as he lay; the birds sang in the wild plum bush above him, and shook the dew-drops upon him as they chased each other through the foliage; a squirrel came down an oak near him and scampered along a log at his side, unheedful of his presence. Still he slept on, the sweet refreshing sleep of tired youth, and one might have said, to see him there: The dead *do* love the living—and heaven hears the prayers of love.

And while he lay here at rest, forgetful of the fears which had hounded him all night long—fears of pursuers who were purely imaginary—his real enemy, he from whom he had most to fear, Black Flynn, lay concealed in the thicket near the farm-house, watch-

ing vainly for his appearance, not knowing that he had again taken to flight.

CHAPTER XVIII.

HARRY AND HIS NEW FRIEND.

As HARRY lay sleeping, unconscious of his wretchedness, there came along the road a man, traveling in the same direction he had been pursuing. This man carried, slung under his arm by a strap which crossed his shoulder, a bundle of old umbrella handles and wires, tied up in a piece of dirty canvas. In one hand he carried a small tin box, which doubtless contained the scanty "kit" of tools necessary to his trade, and in the other a paper parcel loosely done up. He walked with a light step, and apparently a light heart, for he whistled merrily to the birds and mocked the squirrels that barked at him from the trees by the roadside. When he reached the place where Harry had turned aside, he, too, saw the green, inviting spot under the trees, and, lightly climbing the fence, approached it at once. He was about to seat himself upon the log, when he saw the sleeping boy.

"Well, I'll swear!" said he.

He did not swear, however, but approaching the boy he gave a loud hem! This failing to arouse the sleeper, he touched him lightly with his foot and said: "Hello! 'Sleep?"

This had the desired effect. Harry sprang up, and gazed about him with a bewildered air. His first thought, after he had collected his faculties sufficiently to think at all, was that the pursuers he had been dreading all the night were now upon him, but a second glance at the good-natured face of this man convinced him that he had nothing to fear.

"Been asleep?" asked the man.

"Yes," said Harry.

"Been cryin', too, hain't you?"

Harry did not deny it. Indeed, if he had been so inclined, his red and swollen eyes would have betrayed him; so he made no reply.

"Been travelin?" asked the man.

"Yes."

"Which way?"

"To the east."

"Well, that's my way, too. What you been cryin' about?"

Harry did not answer.

"Yes, yes; I see," said the man; "I know. Out of work; out of friends; out of money; out of heart; tired and hungry, and all that. Been sick, too, hain't you?"

"Yes," answered Harry. "I have but just recovered from a severe illness."

"Well, now, I'll bet a nickle you hain't been to breakfast yit, this mornin'."

"I'm afraid you would win," said Harry.

"Well, now, I thought so. Neither have I. I jest come over here to eat a bite myself. That's about what's the matter with you. We'll soon bust that disease. Here's the medicine for your complaint. Warranted to cure or no pay," and he opened his paper parcel, displaying a quantity of bread and meat more than sufficient for two hungry men. "Now then, pitch in, and help yourself."

Harry's eyes betrayed his eagerness, but he hesitated.

"What you waitin' for?" said the man. "Maybe you think I stole it, or begged it. Well, I didn't. I'm none of your whinin', thievin' tramps, now don't you forget it. I'm a respectable travelin' mechanic," and he laughed merrily as he tapped his tin box. "This here grub is paid for in good, honest coppers. That's my style; so pitch in. I'm as hungry as a bear myself, and I shan't wait for manners if you don't hurry up."

Thus urged, Harry hesitated no longer, but "pitched in" in good earnest, while the umbrella mender himself was not backward in appropriating his own share.

"It ain't all the time that you can git sich grub as this in these parts, I tell you," said he; "'less you stop and take a square meal, and that costs too much. So le's fill up, while we have the chance."

Harry ate until his hunger was appeased. "This is not begging," he said to himself. "What is freely offered, I may take without shame."

Those who think differently may settle the point to suit themselves. A hungry man sometimes sees things in a very different light from one who is well fed.

Harry, now, for the first time, narrowly observed his new companion, the umbrella mender. He was a small man, considerably below the medium height, quick and active in his every motion, and with good nature beaming from every lineament of his countenance. His blue eyes were full of merriment that appeared ever ready to bubble over and flood his handsome, almost boyish face, with smiles. "This is an honest man," thought he. "He is no tramp, as that term is generally understood. Such a nature would not stoop to beg, and he is too good natured to steal." He felt that he had found a friend, and his tired, aching heart went out toward this man, and he said to himself, "Here is a companion I can trust." So when their breakfast was eaten, and the umbrella mender proposed that they should travel

together, for a time at least, Harry's first impulse was to accept the offer at once, but then came again that haunting fear of detection, and he hesitated.

"I fear I would only be a burden to you," he said.

"Fiddlesticks! How, I'd like to know?"

"I have no money, and would only be an expense to you. I must find work of some kind to-day, for I can not beg."

"Well, who asked you to beg? What you goin' to work at?"

"I don't know."

"I thought so. Now don't be so techy, boy. Don't I see you are alone and friendless? Hain't I alone, too? I git awful lonesome travelin' along these here out-of-the-way roads, and we'll be company for each other. Besides, I will learn you my trade and you can help me."

"But would we find work for two?"

"Well, umbereller mendin' hain't very lively now, that's a fact, but we'll git enough to keep us; don't you be afraid."

Harry pondered. Would he really run a greater risk of arrest by traveling with this man than to stop and hunt for work, as he would otherwise be compelled to do? Besides he felt his courage renewed by the hearty breakfast he had eaten, and under the

influence of the genial good nature of his new-found friend. So he said:

"I will go with you."

"Good!" replied the man. "Now you're talkin'." And he led the way to the road, and they began their journey.

"What point are you making for?" asked Harry.

"Well, no place in partic'lar. Cincinnati, may be."

"I should like to go to Cincinnati," said Harry.

"All right. It doesn't make no difference to me. I 'spect I'm what folks would call a reg'lar vagabon', for I wander about here, there and everywhere, just as the notion takes me."

"Have you no home?" asked Harry.

"No home and no kin," replied the man. "I 'spect I'm an orphant," and he laughed.

"How long will it take us to get to Cincinnati?" asked Harry.

"That's owin' to how fast we travel. We're about thirty miles north of there now, and, I 'spect, about fifty miles west. We could git there to-morrow night without crowdin'."

Harry still adhered to the purpose he had previously formed to proceed to Cincinnati, and there endeavor to get passage up the river on a boat. He was very anxious to reach the city as soon as possi-

ble, but he did not care to betray his eagerness to his companion. So he said nothing further on the subject. The umbrella mender, however, was in a talkative mood.

"What is your name?" he asked.

"Harry Lawson," answered Harry, before he took time to think of the probable consequences of betraying his name to his new companion. He glanced anxiously at the man, but there was nothing in his countenance to indicate that he had ever heard the name before. Harry felt greatly relieved.

"Well, my name's Moon," said the man, "Billy Moon. You see, I didn't have any name of my own, so they gave me the first they thought of as like as not. Leastways that's the handle they give me, and it suits me as well as any, I reckon. No, I never had a home," he continued, referring to Harry's previous question. "The first I remember I was a little barefooted, dirty chap at the county poor house. When I was big enough to know what was what, that kind o' thing didn't suit me, and I run away."

"Did they treat you badly?" asked Harry.

"Worse'n a dog. They scolded and beat and kicked me about, jist like it was my fault I was born a pauper. I tell you, boy, it's terrible hard to feel that you hain't got a friend in all the wide, wide world, and people a treatin' you jest like they

thought you hadn't no business to be born at all if you didn't want to be kicked about jest as they please."

"I know! I know!" said Harry.

"Well, as I was a sayin' I run away. But that didn't help things much. I got jest about as many kicks and cuffs, and not half so much to eat. It 'peared like I was jest one too many, and there wasn't no place for me. Ever feel that way, boy?"

"Yes, yes," sighed Harry, "I know just how you felt."

"Well, I was knocked from piller to post till I was nigh onto twenty, I reckon, though I never knowed how old I was, exactly, and I hadn't a cent in the world and no trade, and no learnin' nor nothin'. Did you ever have a mother to nurse and pet you?"

"My mother died when I was very young," said Harry in a trembling voice. "But I remember her."

"Well, I don't know nothin' about my mother. Never heard nobody say as I had one. But I used to stand and watch the little chaps what had mothers to take care on 'em, and I tell you it's a big thing. If I'd had a mother what was a mother I wouldn't a been trampin' round mendin' umberellers. There wasn't a formed thing that I could do, 'cept to work

by the day when I could git a job, and people don't like to hire sich chaps as me when they can help it. I managed to git along, though, someway, till the war broke out, and then I went into the army. I got along first-rate there, for I was used to roughin' it and that kind o' thing jist suited me. It was the first time I ever had any friends, and I tell you I felt good. I felt like a man. I got through all right, and then, when I was discharged, I lost sight of all my friends, and hadn't nothin' to do any more. So I knocked about a spell, workin' at one thing or 'nother, but it seemed like I couldn't stick to nothin'. I'd never had a reg'lar job, 'cept in the army, and I 'spect I wasn't much account nohow, so I took to trampin' about. I'd had enough of the pauper business to do me, so I didn't go to beggin'. You don't ketch me askin' people for somethin' to eat and havin' them turn up their noses at me; leastways not while I can help it. Well I tried scissors grindin', but it was too hard work to carry the grindstone, so I took to mendin' umberellers. That does well enough when the weather's bad, but folks don't need umberellers in good weather, so the work's a little light sometimes; but I manage to pick up a livin'. It don't take much, and I've nobody to keep but myself, and where's the difference?"

"But you'll be old some day," said Harry. "What will you do then?"

"Well, I don't know. I never think of that. Now, you're a chap what's got learnin', I 'spect, and you'll have a chance to git along. But I tell you when a feller don't know B from a bull's foot, and has no friends to give him a boost, there's not much chance for him now-a-days, 'cept jest to make a livin'."

"I believe you could do better if you would try," said Harry.

"I don't know. I guess I'm a reg'lar born vagerbon', but I'm none of your lousy, thievin' tramps, I tell you that."

"Do you never fall in with tramps?" asked Harry.

"Lots o' times, but I don't stay with 'em. I tell you they're after no good. I've heerd 'em talk. They've got a lot o' fellers among 'em that'd jest as leave cut a man's throat as not, and the most of 'em would rather steal than beg any time when they git a chance. I stumbled onto a camp of 'em once, and there was a feller there makin' a sort o' speech to 'em, and he told 'em that things was a goin' to be fixed up so's they'd all git rich. They was goin' to divide up things, he said, and they'd all git a sheer. I wanted to ask 'em how long they'd keep it, but I dassent to, 'cause you see they thought I was as good a tramp as any of 'em. Lots o' people think that, as like as not, to look at me," and he laughed merrily.

Harry was at a loss to understand his new companion, who indignantly denied being a tramp, yet, save the begging and crime which are characteristic of the modern article, he could not see so much distinction after all. If his experience of the world had been larger he would have recognized his new friend as one of a class by no means small in this country—restless men, who acquire a habit of wandering, and are never content to settle down to any regular employment. Some of them are tradesmen, good mechanics, so far as skill is concerned, but without ambition or stability of purpose, and many of them, alas, rendered reckless and shiftless by the use of ardent spirits. Good-hearted fellows in the main, most of them, who harm themselves more than any one else, yet, deny it as they may, they form one wing of the great army of tramps, and from their ranks come many recruits for that class which we might term the Regulars. Good-natured, honest, they may be, yet vagabonds after all. Harry, however, did not stop to argue this question. There was something about this man which inspired confidence, and the companionship was grateful to the boy, whose heart was hungry for friendship. He half forgot the terror which haunted him as he listened while this man rattled away about himself. But when he changed the conversation, as he did after a

time, and began to ask questions, Harry gave such short and unsatisfactory answers that the man stopped, and looking him squarely in the face, said:

"See here, boy, if there's anything you don't want to tell, say so, and I'll not ask you any more questions. It's none of my business, I know, and you've a right to keep mum if you want to; but if we're to travel together it'll be best if I know who you be. Don't be afeard of me. I 'spect you're runnin' away from home, hain't you?"

"I have no home," said Harry, sadly.

"No friends you're afeared will foller you?"

"No. No friends."

"Well, then, what is it? Come, out with it. Have you been doin' some dirt, and had to skip out?"

"I don't understand you."

"Hain't been a stealin' nothin'?"

"No," said Harry indignantly.

"Well, I didn't think you was that kind. You're too young to be doin' anything very bad."

"I would rather not talk about myself," said Harry. "I can tell you this much, however, I have done no intentional wrong."

"Well, I don't 'spect you have; so let it go. But if you're in trouble, you'll find the best way's to spit it right out, when you find a feller as you can trust. Maybe you think I'd blow on you, though? If you do, you don't know Billy Moon, that's all."

"No, I don't think that," replied Harry. "But I have nothing to tell."

"Then what do you keep lookin' back so much, and actin' so nervous like? You can't fool me, boy. I've been watchin' you. You're afeard of somethin'."

"I have nothing to tell you," said Harry, yet he trembled and grew pale. "It was your own proposition that we should travel together. I did not seek your confidence. I thank you for the aid you have rendered me, but if you can not trust me, we had better part."

"There, now, don't fly up. Of course I can trust you. What difference does it make? If you don't want to tell, let it go. Only I thought you had somethin' heavy like, on your mind, and it would do you good to git it off. You're your own boss, though—do as you please."

Harry longed to unburden his mind of its dreadful secret, but he dared not do it, so he kept silent. There was one thing which troubled him sorely. He still had the doctor's watch, and he longed to return it to him, yet scarcely knew how, without betraying himself to his pursuers. After walking in silence for a time, for Billy had ceased to talk, and amused himself by whistling and occasionally singing a few lines of a song, he made up his mind to ask advice of his companion without, as he thought, betraying himself;

so he said: "If you had something which you wished to send to a friend without his knowing who sent it, how would you do it?"

"Well, that'd depend on what it was," said Billy.

"Well, a—a watch for instance."

"Why, I'd send it by express from the first station I come to."

"But if you had no money?"

"That wouldn't make a mite of difference. I'd let my friend pay for it when he got it. The young chap has bilked a watch and wants to send it back," he thought to himself. "Well, I wouldn't a thought it of him."

Harry said no more on the subject at the time, nor did he notice that he had been inconsistent in asking the advice of one whom he had previously refused to trust with the history of his life. If his companion observed the fact he made no remark, but began to talk again in his merry, rattling manner, and mile after mile was passed over almost unnoticed. The road they were following had not yet passed through any of the larger towns, which lay upon the great thoroughfare of railroad travel, and it was not until afternoon that they came to a railroad station. Here Harry made an excuse to leave his companion for a time. Billy fully understood his purpose, but said nothing to him about it.

"He's gone to send back the watch," he said to himself, as he saw Harry enter the station. "Well, poor feller, he's sorry enough now, by his looks; so I'll not say anything about it."

Such, indeed, was Harry's mission. He wrapped the watch up in a neat package, unobserved by the agent, and then asking for a pen, he directed it to Dr. Blair and handed it to the man.

"Pay charges here?" asked the man.

"No," replied Harry, as he walked away, and he had reached the door when the agent called him back to get a receipt for the package. He put this in his pocket without taking time to look at it, and rejoined his companion. The two then proceeded on their way.

Billy Moon stopped occasionally to ask for work, but did not appear the least disappointed that he found none to do.

"All right," he said, "we'll get on faster." He had sufficient means to purchase food, which he insisted on sharing with Harry. Nothing further of interest occurred during their journey. They slept that night in the open air, as the weather was warm, luckily for Harry, who was still suffering somewhat from the effects of his recent illness, and the next evening, just after dark, they entered Cincinnati.

"Where you goin' to now?" asked Billy.

"To the river," said Harry. "I want to get work on a steamboat."

"Better not try that," said Billy. "I've been there, and I'd rather be an army mule than a roustabout on a steamboat. It's worse'n a dog's life."

"I only want to work my passage up the river," said Harry.

"Oh! that way," said Billy. "Well, come along; I'll show you the way."

On reaching the river wharf they found quite a number of boats taking on and putting off lading, and Harry, accompanied by the umbrella mender, went from one to another, trying to find one going up the river on which the boy could work his passage to Pittsburg. After several fruitless trials, Harry at last found a mate whose heart was less hardened than those of his fellows, and who took pity on the delicate youth, and gave him permission to stay on his boat. "Of course you'll only be in the way," he said; "but if you want to go so bad, I'll find something for you to do."

So it was settled, and Harry sat down on the deck in front of the great glowing furnace, for the boat was almost ready for departure—would go about midnight, the mate said. Billy Moon told Harry that he wanted to go up town awhile, and would return to see him off and bid him good-bye. Now Billy was one of

those unfortunate creatures called periodical drinkers. As long as he was in the country, away from the temptations of jolly companions, he kept sober enough, but a visit to the city meant to him a drinking spree, which usually lasted as long as he had money to buy a drink or a friend to treat him. He did not proceed far from the river, therefore, before he entered a saloon and called for a drink. As he was waiting to be served a man came in and approached the bar. Billy turned to the new comer and observed that he was a tall man with a face horribly scarred, although partially concealed by a high coat collar and a slouch hat. It was, in short, our old acquaintance, Black Flynn, whom we left following Dr. Blair's carriage as it returned to the station, after the fruitless search at the farm house. His first intention had been to try to find the boy by following him through the country; but, recognizing the uncertainty of such a course, he remembered that Harry's previóus intention had been to go to Cincinnati, and thinking that, in all probability, he would now proceed to that city at once, he resolved to take the cars and return there to await the boy's coming.

It was early in the night, and the regular customers of the saloon had not yet come in. With the exception of the bar-keeper, the two men were the only occupants of the room. Billy, like all good-natured

men addicted to drink, loved company in his cups, and he invited the stranger to drink with him. Flynn, nothing loth, accepted the invitation, and after drinking a glass of brandy was about to leave the room, when a remark by the umbrella mender caused him to change his mind.

"I'm jest in from the country, you know," said Billy, "and I'm as dry as a fish. Haven't had a good square drink for three weeks."

"Which way have you been?" asked Flynn.

"Out in Injiany," said Billy.

"What part?" asked Flynn. "Have another drink? I'll set them up this time."

"Don't care if I do," said Billy, answering the last question first. "What parts have I been in? Oh, the south part mostly. Up as far as the Nash'nal road."

"Been traveling alone?"

"Mostly," said Billy, after swallowing his whisky. "Had a pard part of the way in."

"I'm looking for a friend in from that direction. Maybe you've seen him. A heavy-set man with red hair. Limps a little."

"Haven't seen him as I know of," said Billy.

As the reader is aware it was no "heavy-set man with red hair" that Flynn was looking for. But with the usual cunning of men of his class he wished

to ascertain if Billy had seen Harry Lawson, without asking the question directly.

"Well, I suppose he will be here before many days," he said, referring to the imaginary "heavy-set man." "By the way, where is your pard?"

"Oh, he's not here. He's down at the river. I'm goin' down there to see him off directly. He's a little pale mite of a chap, hardly fit to take care of himself."

"Let's sit down and have another drink," said Flynn, eagerly. He did not doubt that he had at last found the boy.

"Don't care if I do," said Billy, who was now beginning to feel the effects of the liquor he had drunk. He had so thoroughly enjoyed his own potations that he did not observe that on the last occasin Flynn had only sipped his brandy, and then poured it slyly on the floor beside the counter, else he might have suspected that his companion had some sinister designs in plying him with liquor.

It is true that the tramp might have satisfied himself by asking his question direct, but he feared that if the umbrella mender's companion was Harry Lawson the boy might have told him enough to put him on his guard as soon as he began to ask direct questions. Besides, it was not in his nature to deal candidly with any subject, and he preferred the more in-

direct way. The men seated themselves at a table at one end of the room, and Flynn plied his companion with liquor until Billy swore that the tramp was the best fellow in the world, and the latter had no difficulty in learning that it was indeed Harry Lawson who had entered the city in company with this man, and was even then on one of the boats lying at the wharf.

"What boat is your friend on?" asked Flynn.

"Well, I'll swear I didn't notice the name. But I know where zhe lays. I'll find 'er. Come along. I'll introduce you. I'll tell him you're a friend of mine. The best feller in the world. Drink like a fish. Treat like a gent'l'man."

"When are you going?"

"'S soon's yer ready."

"I can't go with you," said Flynn, after a moment's thought. "I want to see a man up street, and it's time I was off."

"Well, i's jest's zhu please. I'll go'n she's boy off. Good feller, Larry Hawson. Like zhim like's a brozer."

"Good night," said Flynn, as he rose to go, for he feared the fellow would get too drunk for his purpose.

"Good bye," said Billy as he got to his feet by the aid of the table. "Good feller zhat," he said as

Flynn left the room. "Good feller. Treats like'z a fish."

Flynn walked to the opposite side of the street and waited until Billy came out, and then followed him, as he walked unsteadily toward the river.

"That's lucky," he muttered; "I've found that d—d boy, and I'll make an end of this business now."

Billy Moon staggered across the gang plank and looked about for Harry, but the boy had changed his position, and he did not see him. The liquor he had drunk had by this time so completely overcome poor Billy that he forgot all about Harry, and tumbling down among some barrels on the forward deck, he was soon in a drunken sleep.

Midnight came, and the steamer was ready to leave the wharf. Just as the men were about to take in the plank, a tall man, wearing a slouch hat, came hastily down the wharf and sprang on the deck. The boat backed into the river clear of the other shipping, and, swinging gracefully around in answer to her helm, turned her prow up stream, and sped away on her voyage. Billy Moon snored away in his drunken sleep among the barrels. Harry sat on the after-deck alone, and watched the lights of the city fade away as the boat plowed on her way up the river. Black Flynn, concealed in the shadow of the wheel-

house, looked out upon him with vengeance in his glance and murder in his heart.

An hour passed on. Lulled by the monotonous sound of escaping steam and splashing paddles, Harry fell asleep. Flynn left his concealment and stole toward him. Once he paused and looked about him. No one was near. He reached the side of the sleeping boy and bent above him.

Ay, shudder in your slumber, gentle maiden, in your far-off home, and grow cold at heart. It is not all a hideous dream. Pray, sainted mother, if the dead e'er pray, "Father in heaven, protect my poor orphan boy!"

CHAPTER XIX.

THE VILLAIN FOILED.

FLYNN bent for a moment above his intended victim, and having assured himself that the boy was asleep, he took from his pocket a small "billy" made of rattan, loaded at one end with lead—a most murderous weapon—and raised his arm to strike, but the blow did not fall. A pair of powerful arms grasped him by the shoulders, and, with a quick and nervous motion, sent him spinning against the timbers enclosing the lower deck. With a curse the tramp sprang up, but met the cold muzzle of a revolver pressed in his face, and a voice demanded:

"What are you doing here?"

This noise awoke Harry, who arose, bewildered, to his feet. Flynn, finding himself detected, made no reply.

"Here, boy, do you know this fellow?" asked the man, whom Harry now recognized as the mate of the boat.

He drew near, and although the light was dim and

uncertain in this part of the boat, he could not be mistaken in that form, notwithstanding the features were partially concealed and bore the frightful scars they had received at his hand. He started back with an exclamation, half surprise, half terror:

"Black Flynn!" he exclaimed.

Flynn laughed—a vicious, devilish laugh it was, that made the boy's blood run cold.

"So you know me, in spite of these d—d scars?" he said. "How do you like the looks of your work?" and he removed his hat and turned his face more to the light.

Harry shuddered, for that countenance, disfigured as much by hatred as by its scars, wore the expression of a fiend.

"I am sorry I struck you," he said, "but you drove me to desperation by your taunts after the injuries you had inflicted upon me. I am glad, however, that it is no worse."

"No worse!" fairly howled the tramp. "No worse! what could be worse than to be compelled to carry this d—d hideous face through the world, an object of loathing or terror to all I meet?"

"I thought I had killed you," said Harry.

"Ha! ha! ha!" laughed the tramp. "No doubt your will was good enough, but you see I am still alive. I intend to live till I even up the score be-

tween us, and then I don't care how quick I die. You're not rid of me yet; you'll find that out."

"Come, I've heard enough of this," said the mate, who all this time had kept the tramp covered with his pistol, for he saw that he still meant mischief. "I saw you when you came aboard and I didn't like your looks, so I kept my eye on you. It's well for you, my boy, that I did. I know nothing of the quarrel between you two, but I knew that this fellow meant to murder you and fling you into the river. That's enough to send him up for a while, and I'll see that he doesn't trouble you again while you are on this boat. I don't understand exactly what you've done to him, but I should say he deserved all he got. Now, march!" he said to Flynn. "We'll give you a cabin passage until we can hand you over to the officers."

Flynn sullenly obeyed and walked in front of the mate toward the forward part of the boat. As before stated, this incident took place on the after deck. The crew were all busy on the forward deck, and, but for the watchful eye of the mate, Flynn would have accomplished his murderous purpose without hindrance. Harry followed the two men with mingled emotions of fear and joy. Fear for his life, since the tramp had sworn to destroy it, but joy that Flynn was alive and that the terrible crime of

murder no longer rested on his soul. "He is alive! "He is alive!" he repeated to himself. "Thank God, I am not a murderer;" and his heart bounded and his blood glowed under the influence of that thought, and he felt like one who had just awakened from a frightful nightmare, thankful that it was all a hideous dream.

On reaching the foot of the stairs which ascended to the cabin Flynn attempted to put his hand into his pocket, evidently with the intention of drawing a pistol, but the watchful eye of the mate detected the movement, and he said:

"Stop that, or I'll shoot you."

The tramp lowered his hand.

Several of the crew now collected about the trio, and the mate ordered them to disarm the tramp. This they did, and took from him a revolver and a murderous looking knife. The "billy" had fallen on the deck where the mate had first seized him. Two of the men took hold of him, one by either arm, to prevent his escape, but before they began the ascent of the stairs a commotion on the forward deck attracted the attention of the mate, and two of the crew came, leading, or rather carrying, a man between them. It was Billy Moon, whom they had discovered and aroused from his drunken sleep. Billy was still very drunk, but he recognized both Harry and the tramp.

"Hello!" he said to Flynn. "How'd you come here? Thought you'd gone t' ze a man. Harry, this friend's gen'l'man o' mine. Firz rate feller. Treats like'z gen'l'man. Shake! Come down t' ze ye off ol' feller. Good-bye," and he tried to shake hands with Harry, totally unconscious that the boat had left the wharf and was miles on her voyage up the river.

"Do you know this fellow?" asked the mate of Harry.

"Yes," replied the boy. "His name is Billy Moon. We traveled together on our way to Cincinnati."

"What connection has he with this fellow?" referring to Flynn.

"I can't tell," said Harry. "I didn't know that they had ever met."

"Perhaps he's an accomplice," said the mate.

"No, I think not," said Harry. "He is a good-natured, inoffensive fellow, an umbrella mender, who was very kind to me when I needed assistance, and I don't think he knows the character of this man."

Billy was too drunk to stand steadily on his feet, and the men were obliged to support him. This by-play attracted the attention of the mate, as well as of the crew, and Flynn, taking advantage of their momentary lack of vigilance, broke from those who held

him, and, with one bound, sprang to the guards of the boat, and plunged into the river. "Man overboard!" cried some one. The engineer, hearing the cry, stopped the engines; a few hoarse words passed through the tubes extending between the engine-room and the pilot-house; the pilot's bell tingled, and the boat lay to. The mate meanwhile had sprung on the guards, revolver in hand, and stood peering out into the darkness, but the tramp was nowhere to be seen. As quickly as possible the yawl was manned and put off in search of the fugitive, but after rowing about in the darkness for some time it returned, and the crew reported that the man was not to be found.

"He has escaped or gone to the bottom of the river," said the mate.

The bell tingled again, the great arms of the engine rose and fell, the boat trembled again with the jar of escaping steam, and went foaming on her way up the river.

Shortly after a man emerged from the river on the Ohio side and climbed the bank. He dashed the water from his face and hair, and shook his clenched hand at the receding boat.

"He has escaped me," he said. "But we will meet sometime when there is no one to interfere, and then, Harry Lawson, you will learn what it is to make an enemy of Black Flynn."

Having delivered himself thus he turned his face from the river, and walked away as rapidly as his drenched garments would permit.

On the evening of his departure from Cincinnati a conversation of no small importance to Harry Lawson took place at Dr. Blair's home. The doctor had just received an express package, brought from Calusa by Mr. Gwin, and, greatly to the surprise of himself and family, on opening it they beheld the lost watch. The doctor hastily compared the address on the package with the letter Harry had written before his flight from the farm house and which he had retained in his possession, and without a word he handed both to his wife.

"They are the same," said Mrs. Blair, in a startled whisper.

"They are the same," echoed the doctor.

Carrie, who had observed this pantomine, now approached and asked its meaning. At first her mother hesitated and glanced toward her husband. Dr. Blair nodded assent, and she placed both pieces of writing in her daughter's hand. Carrie recognized the writing at once, and her face flushed with eager joy as she exclaimed:

"It's Harry's writing! Where is he? Where did this watch come from?"

"Yes, it is Harry's writing," said the doctor gravely.

"But the name of the station from which it came is of but little consequence since he is evidently trying to avoid us. What is of most importance to us now appears to be how did he get possession of the watch. I have tried to believe in the boy, yet it seems that something is continually transpiring to shake my faith in his integrity. This watch, he asserted at the trial, was in the possession of the tramps. When he left us so mysteriously, I quieted my doubts by arguing that it was because he had lost the watch that he did not wish to meet me, and that he had fled under the influence of that dread. But the old woman, where he lay sick, told me that he had a watch when he came there, and that he had taken it away with him when he fled. This I did not tell you, for I feared to distress you. Although I could not but feel that the boy had deceived us all, yet I fought against the suspicion, and tried to believe in him. And now that we have received it from his own hands after all this time, what can we think but that it was guilt which induced him to leave us, and that, smitten with remorse for his evil deed, he has at last made the only reparation in his power by sending back the watch."

"I'll not believe it," said Carrie. "I know that there have been dark circumstances against him before, and they were all cleared away. So will this be in time, I feel sure. I will never believe that Harry

Lawson is a thief until I hear him acknowledge it with his own lips."

"Well, I hope it is as you think," said the doctor. "But if it were not for my promise to Mr. Conover I would now abandon the search. What is the use of pursuing one who wishes to escape from our kindness, and who will not thank us for our exertions in his behalf?"

"Do not give him up yet," said Mrs. Blair. "I know that this circumstance of the watch is a suspicious one, yet, like Carrie, I still believe that the boy is honest. I have reproached myself bitterly for my first doubts of his integrity, and I will not again listen to my suspicions until there is something more definite than this. Let the detective start to-morrow, as has already been arranged, and endeavor to overtake the boy. If, then, when he is assured that he is welcome to our home, he still desires to remain away, I will have no more to say. But I can not feel satisfied until this mystery is cleared up."

Carrie gave her mother a look beaming with gratitude.

"May he not have recovered the watch from the tramps?" she said. "May he not have followed them for this very purpose? I will believe anything but that he is a thief. I know he is not that."

"Well, well," said the doctor with a sigh, "I will try to believe as you wish and will continue the search. I can not leave home myself, but Mr. Brown shall start as soon as possible."

CHAPTER XX.

THE DETECTIVE ON THE TRAIL.

WHEN the case was laid before the detective he shook his head and looked puzzled. "It will be a hard case to work up now," he said. "The boy has no doubt gone to Cincinnati; but will he stay there? That's the question. I don't believe he will. He is evidently trying to get away from something or somebody, and my impression is that he will go on east. I remember that, in a conversation I had with him when bringing him here after his rescue from the tramps, he told me that his original intention, before he stopped with you, had been to reach the river and try to work his passage to Pittsburg. I have no doubt that he will now try to do this. The shortest way will be to go at once to Cincinnati and try to find out something about him from the boatmen on the river. It will be useless to stop at the station where he expressed the watch; for, even if they noticed him, we can find out no more than we already know—that he has been there. I will start for Cin-

cinnati to-morrow. I can not go to-day, and I doubt very much whether he has yet reached the city, although it is possible that he has. Do not expect too much from me, for I am not at all sanguine of success. I will do my best, however, and as soon as I have any definite information I will let you know."

Brown arrived at Cincinnati late in the evening of the following day, and, proceeding at once to the wharf, made inquiry on the various boats lying there. After several fruitless attempts he at length found a mate who remembered that, two nights before, a boy, answering the description of Harry Lawson, had endeavored to get passage on his boat, but as he was not ready to sail, and, as he said, he "didn't want to be bothered with boys no how," he had refused to take him. He remembered also that the boy was accompanied by a small man, who, from the bundle he carried, was evidently an umbrella mender. This he remembered because the fellow had got in his way on the deck and he had run against the end of his bundle of handles. He did not know where they went. Hadn't seen the boy since. Several boats had gone up the river since then, and he might have been on one of them.

The detective walked away from the wharf in deep thought. It was now dark, and the lamps were

lighted on the streets. As he was walking slowly along, he saw before him a man whose form appeared familiar. "I have seen that man somewhere," said he to himself. "Where was it? Let me think." He could not see the man's face, but, notwithstanding this, he at last succeeded in identifying him. "That's the tall tramp they call Black Flynn," he thought. "I remember him now. I saw him at Calusa during the preliminary trial of the tramps for the murder. He is the man who was the leading spirit of the capture of the boy, and may now know where he is. I'll watch him."

It was indeed our old acquaintance, the tramp, who failing in his scheme of vengence, had returned at once to the city. Brown followed him for several squares, when Flynn entered a saloon—the same to which the reader has been conducted before. The detective looked through the glass door. "That's him sure enough," he said; "but one would scarcely recognize him by his face. He has met with some kind of an accident lately that has marked him horribly."

Flynn did not stop long at the bar, but entered one of the stalls before alluded to, and ordered brandy and cigars. Brown now found an opportunity to enter the room without being discovered by the tramp, and sat down in another stall at some distance from

him and ordered beer. His intention was to wait until Flynn left the room and then to follow him, in hopes that he might find some clue to the missing boy. Several others soon after entered the saloon, which appeared to be a place of resort for the vilest men of the city, and two or three entered the stall with Flynn, whom they seemed to know, and where they were soon engaged in a game of cards. The time dragged heavily to the detective, who was not close enough to hear much of the conversation among the men, except when, under the excitement of the game, they raised their voices to a high pitch. He was beginning to feel very much bored, when the bar-keeper called out:

"I say, Flynn, who was that little cove you was a treatin' here night before last?"

"I don't know," answered Flynn. "He was an umbrella mender, he said."

"Well, you got him as drunk as a biled owl, and he went off and left his traps here," said the bar-keeper. "He said he was goin' down to the river to see somebody off. What's come of him?"

"How the d—l do I know?" said Flynn. "Fell into the river, as like as not." The men laughed, and the game went on.

It was late into the night before Flynn rose to go. Notwithstanding the frequent orders for brandy, which

came from the stall he occupied, he appeared to be perfectly sober. He stopped at the bar, paid his bill, and, without observing the detective, left the room. When he was safely on the outside, Brown followed him. The tramp did not stop until he reached the Little Miami depot, which he entered, and the detective saw him take his place on a train which was about to leave for the east.

"Well, if the boy is here *he* knows nothing about it," said the detective to himself. "I'll wait and see if he leaves on the train, and if he does, I'll have to try some other dodge." The train rolled out in a few minutes, bearing Flynn with it.

Brown walked away pondering. He recalled the remark made by the bar-keeper about the umbrella mender, and putting this with the information he had obtained from the mate of the boat, he decided in his own mind that Harry had found a passage up the river. Having come to this conclusion he determined to proceed to Pittsburg as soon as possible.

"If he has taken passage on a boat, I may yet reach Pittsburg before him, and meet him when he arrives," thought he. He left Cincinnati the next morning, and, on reaching the smoky city, he repaired at once to the principal steamboat landing and began his search.

Here he found the boat on which Harry had taken

passage, and learned from the mate a history of his adventures with the tramp, but the boy had left the boat immediately on its arrival, and had gone off in company with Billy Moon, the umbrella mender. The detective was much chagrined at his ill luck in being so near success, yet failing at last; but he was a man not easily discouraged; so, getting as minute a description of Harry's companion as the mate could give him, he determined to make a thorough search of the city. "For," thought he, "if he has a companion he may not leave the city at once, since it is probable that the two may, between them, manage to get work enough to keep them. Then, this umbrella mender drinks, the mate says, unluckily for him, and for the boy, too, if he follows his example; but, luckily for me, for you always know where to look for a drinker." But day after day passed on, and his search was still in vain. He had visited nearly every saloon in the city, night after night, but saw no one who answered the description of Billy Moon. He had enlisted the aid of the city police and detectives, but they were equally at fault. At last he was forced to conclude that Harry and his companion had left the city. One evening in the latter part of the second week in July, while walking along one of the streets leading over the river into Allegheny, he saw before him a man whom he thought he recognized.

He was a large, heavy man, with red hair and a loose, slouching gait, which he was confident he had seen before. Crossing the street he walked rapidly past him, and then pausing where he would be himself partially concealed while the man would have to pass under the gaslight, Brown waited for him to approach. "Sandy Hines! I knew it," thought he. "How did he come here?"

His first impulse was to have the villain arrested, but on second thought he concluded to follow him.

"I may find the boy by his means," he thought. "Besides, if I don't I've no time to bother with this fellow now, but I'll keep my eye on him." Soon after crossing the river, Sandy left the street, and, turning down an alley, entered a low, dilapidated looking building from the door of which came the sound of many voices and the clinking of glasses, while the fumes of whisky and tobacco seemed to permeate the whole atmosphere in that vicinity. It was, in fact, a low drinking house, and the resort of the worst class of men from both cities. The door was open, and, looking in, the detectives saw nearly a hundred men congregated in the room, which, notwithstanding its low and squalid front, was quite spacious. Brown entered the door, but kept at a distance from Sandy, and, slouching his hat over his eyes so as partly to conceal his face, remained a spectator

of the scene. On one side, near the door, was a bar, which appeared to be well patronized by the members of the assembly. The remainder of the room was probably used for a dancing hall, but on this occasion a meeting of more importance seemed to be in progress. A large table or counter was placed at the farther end, and, in front of this the larger part of the crowd was congregated, some sitting, some standing, as if waiting for the exercises to begin. A few among them looked like laboring men and mechanics, but by far the greater number were tramps and street loafers, thieves and roughs. In short, it was one of those meetings into which respectable mechanics and laboring men occasionally permit themselved to be inveigled, but which are a disgrace to the name of honest labor—an assembly of the riff-raff of city life, who so frequently take advantage of the wrongs which honest labor too often suffers to incite to riot, pillage and bloodshed. What a comment upon the intelligence of our country when they, who are the worst enemies the laboring man can have, are permitted in his name to bring reproach upon him by pretending to espouse his cause, only that they, amid the confusion and anarchy they incite, may profit at the expense of rich and poor alike.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE COMMUNISTS' MEETING.

SHORTLY after the detective entered the room a man sprang upon the counter and began to speak. His coat was off, his collar open, and he was perspiring more profusely than he had done in a score of years at honest labor. "Feller citizens," he said, "things has got to be changed. The rich has got to come down from their fine carriages that throw dust in the eyes of us poor laboring men, and take it afoot. We've stood just all we're agoin' to stand. What right has they, I'd like to know, to ride over us, and live in ease and idleness while we has to earn our living by the sweat of our brows. They don't do nothin' at all but just live on the fat of the land and insult laborin' men. And them as does anything gits more in a day than the poor laborin' man can earn in a week. I go in for makin' things equal. One man is as good as another in this country—"

"And a d—d sight better," shouted some one.

The men laughed, and the speaker went on:

"Don't we love our wives and children jest as well as they do, and haint they jest as good a right to wear silks and satins and rings and sich, as the stuck up wives and daughters of the bloated monop'lists? Of course they has, and we're goin' to have them, too. Look at the ware-houses and elevators full of grain in the city, and the poor a starvin' for bread. Many a time I've gone home and found my wife and children a cryin' for bread, and I hadn't a nickel to buy it with."

"Spent it all for beer," said a voice.

Some of the men laughed at this, and some cried "Put him out! Put him out!" But no one seemed to know who had caused the interruption. The speaker proceeded again:

"I tell you the time has come at last to stop this thing. The hard-hearted Shylocks of this town are sleepin' to-night over a powder mine that will blow them all to h—ll some of these days. The workin' men are goin' to take this thing in hand, and when the fire's lighted, it'll be the biggest thing you ever saw. Then let every man help hisself to what comes handiest, and learn the rich that they can't go on forever a suckin' the blood of honest labor."

Here the speaker ceased, got down, put on his coat and went to the bar and took a drink. The bar-keeper raked the price of a loaf of bread into his

till, and the drinker heaved a sigh, no doubt, for the wife and children whom he had so pathetically pictured as starving at home. The next speaker began by stating that he was from the oil regions. He had worked there a while, but he saw that he was only laboring to support the monopolists, and he had quit. He was now out of work and didn't intend to strike a lick until the wages were raised so that he could earn a better living. He grew quite eloquent over the wrongs of the working man and closed by saying:

"There is thousands and thousands of barrels of oil in the tanks up there now, and the men that own the wells say they can't pay any higher wages because they can't sell the oil. I'll tell you what they are a goin' to do up there. Them tanks is a goin' to take fire, some of these nights, and that oil is a goin' up in smoke, and then we'll see if there won't be more demand for labor. That's the way to deal with these capitalists. If they won't pay you livin' wages, why smoke 'em out. Them's my sentiments."

"Them" appeared to be the sentiments of the crowd, too, for this remark was greeted with vociferous applause, under cover of which the speaker descended from his perch, and gravitating, like his predecessor, to the bar, drowned his wrongs in a whisky straight.

If speaking was dry work, listening seemed no less

so, for the bar-keeper was the busiest man in the room. He was, for the time at least, what the others were not, a laboring man. If the starving wives and children before alluded to were not myths, their prospects of speedy relief were by no means flattering, if such men as these were their only providers. When the next speaker mounted the table Brown started with surprise, for he at once recognized Black Flynn. The tramp glanced about over the assembled throng for a moment until all was still, and then raising his arm tragically, began:

"I see before me men created in the image of God, whose hearts, at some time, have beat high with hope; who have pictured to themselves a career of prosperity, ending in homes of peace and plenty; who have dreamed of ease and honor, after years of honest endeavor; men whose hands have grown callous by contact with the implements of toil, and whose hearts, alas, have grown sore with suffering. Where are the hopes which lent such a roseate glow to the future? They lie in ashes on your hearts to-night, unless, indeed, they have been washed away in your tears. Where are the happy homes of your dreams? Behold them to-day. Gaunt famine sits crouched like a ghastly specter at their broken doors. Where is the wife for whom you would coin your heart's blood into gold were it possible? She sits at

home to-night, haggard and pale, and hollow-eyed, praying for death; or it may be, she has found that last rest of the broken-hearted poor—a pauper's grave. Where are the children that were to be your pride and joy, the ornaments of your homes? Behold them, ragged and famine-stricken, growing up to ignorance and vice, while you are powerless to avert their fate. Now look abroad over the wide land, groaning under its weight of food and wealth. Here are store-houses full of grain, but they are locked against you, and you and yours die of want in sight of plenty. Here are broad fields awaiting the hand of the tiller, but you dare not sow or reap, for others have been here before you and have monopolized the soil. The bounteous hand of heaven has showered blessings all over the land, but they have been grasped by a few, and the many must wait until it is doled out to them, a miserable pittance in pay for the labor of years of wretchedness. You have strength in your limbs; you have courage in your hearts; you vastly outnumber your oppressors; yet, you stand trembling before them, meekly begging permission to toil for what is as much yours as theirs. How long will you endure this? Will you continue to be the slaves of those bloated tyrants, or will you rise, in very shame at your imbecility, and hurl them from their usurped possessions?"

"Yes! yes! Down with capital! Down with the monopolists!" was the cry which followed these words, and, for a moment, the crowd swayed to and fro as if shaken by a mighty wind. Flynn continued:

"To-day I passed a stately mansion in this city. Under an arbor in a spacious yard sat a woman—a lady—arrayed in splendor. In her lap she held a little dog, upon which she bestowed greater care than you can give your offspring. About her played two children, a boy and a girl, beautiful, healthful, richly clad and nurtured in every luxury. That was the home of one of the men who lord it over you and over me. The food is taken from the mouths of your children that his may revel in abundance. Your wife grows hollow-eyed and pallid that his may wear the bloom of beauty. Have you the souls of men left in your miserable bodies that you suffer this injustice? If you have one lingering spark of manhood left in you, why do you submit to the rule of these men? Do not you know that it is you who should rule the land? Do you not create its wealth? Then why do you permit these harpies to monopolize it? Why will you longer sit down and weep, when every principle of manhood demands that you should act? The earthquake is coming which is to dash into chaos these monuments of iniquity. You can hear its rumbling in the distance.

Soon you will hear the crash of falling houses and see the flames of burning cities. Then from the ruins will arise a fairer structure, founded upon the equality of all things. It is for you this great work is to be done. Are you willing to give it a helping hand?"

"Yes! yes!" and cries of "That's the talk!"

"Are you ready to strike down the tyrants who have been treadiag on the hearts of those you love? Are you ready to compel them to disgorge their ill-gotten gains, and to give you the just rewards of your labors?"

"Of course we is. Yes! yes! Bully for you!"

"Then wait with patience a few more days, and the opportunity will be given you. Let no squeamish notions of fancied honor withhold your hand. Strike, and strike home. Strike for your starving wives and children. Strike and spare not, until these vampires, gorged with the blood of their victims, lie crushed and suppliant before you."

Flynn descended amid a thunder of applause, and before the confusion died away, a little wiry man sprang upon the counter. He was more than half drunk, and could scarcely keep his balance. Seeing this, the crowd, anticipating fun, encouraged him to proceed. Brown ran over in his mind the description he had received of Harry's companion, and he said to

himself: "I have found him at last. That is certainly Billy Moon."

It was indeed our jolly friend, the umbrella mender, who had strolled into the place, and, being just drunk enough to render him reckless, was about to reply to Flynn's tirade. Perhaps if his audience had known in advance that his views were quite different from those of the previous speaker they might not have indulged him with a hearing. But Billy was in for a speech, and the crowd, as we have said, was in for fun.

"The last gen'l'man as 'drest you talked about your wives and children. I'll bet a nickel there hain't half a dozen on ye what has got a wife, let alone the children. If you hev, you'd a darn sight better be with 'em, a nussin' the baby, than to be here a talkin' about earthquakes and Skylarks and sich things."

Here there were some angry cries of "Put him out!" but by far the larger number cried, "Let him go on! Hear! Hear!" and other cries designed to encourage him. Billy went on.

"You talk about starvin'. Well, how many of you fellers is a starvin'? Come, hold up your hands. You hain't, hay! Well, if you have wives and babies a starvin', hain't you ashamed of yourselves? A loaf of bread don't cost much more'n a glass of beer,

and there's not one of you but's drunk a dozen glasses to-night. How's that for starvin'. I 'spect if these here Skylarks, or what you call 'em, spent their time a loafin' round a drinkin' beer and talkin' about starvin', they'd have hollow-eyed wives and sickly children too. I'm a hard lot myself, and I drinks my beer when I wants it and can git it, and I 'spect it puts more color in my nose than nickels in my pocket, but I ain't one of them fellers what believes that 'cause some feller's rich that's the reason I'm poor—not by a darn sight. Why don't you go to work and—"

But here Billy was jerked violently from the counter by the keeper of the house, who said "he'd not have his customers insulted any longer," and Billy slipped through the crowd and out of the door, followed by the detective.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE DETECTIVE AND BILLY MOON.

THE detective overtook Billy Moon at the entrance to the alley and called him by name.

"Well, that's my name," said the umbrella mender. "Who are you?"

"My name is Brown," answered the detective.

"Well, your name sounds famil'ar like," said Billy, who was in one of his jocular moods, for he was still chuckling to himself over the confusion he had caused at the meeting of the communists. "'Pears like I've heerd it afore, but I guess I don't know you."

"I want a few moments' conversation with you," said Brown.

"All right! Go ahead!"

"Not here. Let us go where we will not be interrupted."

The detective led the way down the street until they came to an eating-house, into which he was followed by Billy, and the two seated themselves at a table, apart from the other occupants of the place.

"Now, go ahead," said Billy. "What do you want?"

"Where is Harry Lawson?" asked Brown.

Billy looked startled, and did not reply for a moment. He recalled Harry's adventure with the tramp, and, although the boy had never taken him fully into his confidence, he believed that he had enemies from whom he was trying to escape, and he hesitated to answer for fear of betraying him into the hands of those who sought to do him an injury. At length he said:

"Harry Lawson? Who's he?"

"Now, Billy," said the detective, "there's no use trying to fool me. I know all about it. Didn't you come to Cincinnati together? Didn't he get passage on a steamboat; and didn't you get drunk and lose your kit, and stagger on the boat and go to sleep, and get carried away without knowing it? I know all about it, you see; the boy's escape from the tramp, and all."

"Well, what then?" said Billy. "Is that any sign I know where he is now?"

"But I am convinced you do know, or you would say so at once."

"Well, s'pose I do? What you goin' to do about it?"

"Come, Billy, you are a friend to the boy, I know,

for I have heard something of it from the mate of the boat."

"And what be you?" asked Billy. "What you after him for? How do I know you haint one of the set as is a tryin' to hound the boy down? The same what he's been a-tryin' to git away from?"

"I assure you I am his friend," said Brown. "I am sent by his best friends to find and take him home."

"But the boy don't want to go back, and I'm not a-goin' to give him away. That's not my style," said Billy.

"You don't understand this thing, Billy," said Brown. "The boy is laboring under a mistake. At least his friends think so; and they believe that if they can find him it will all be cleared up, and he will be glad to go back again. If you wish to befriend him you can not do him a better turn than to take me to him."

"I don't know about that," said Billy. "S'pose you do see the boy, and he don't want to go back. What then?"

"I promise you, on the honor of a man, that if, after his friends have found him, and conversed with him, he still refuses to return, they will not try to restrain his actions. You know where he is, I am sure. Go to him and tell him that I am here, sent by Dr.

Blair to find him. Tell him that his un—no, I'll tell him that when I see him. Tell him that his friends are anxious for his return, and that I am ready to take him back at once. Then bring me his answer."

"Well, that sounds all fair and square," said Billy, pondering. "Where'll I see you?"

"At the Seventh Avenue Hotel. Then you do know where he is?"

"Yes."

"Then tell him what I have said, and bring him with you in the morning."

"That can't be did. He's sick abed."

"Sick!"

"Yes; he was took bad the first night after we got here. Took with a fever, they say, and was ravin' crazy for three days. You see, he had a sick spell back in Injiany, and liked to died, I guess, and he started out afore he was quite well, and sleepin' out at night, and may be this tramp business on the boat had somethin' to do with it; so he took down agin. Got a back-set, you see. When we got off'n the boat we begun to look about for work, and got a job to help load some coal oil, and worked at it till night, but I seed the boy was about played out, and I went and hunted up a boardin' house for him, and he's there now, too weak to git up, and won't be out for a week yit, the doctor says."

"You had a doctor, then?"

"Of course we did. D'ye s'pose I's a goin' to let the little chap lay there and die 'thout help? That's not my style. I hadn't much money, that's a fact, but I found a doctor that agreed to see him cheap, and I managed to work 'round and git enough to pay for his medicine and keepin'."

"And you have done this for one who was an entire stranger to you?" exclaimed Brown, looking at the little umbrella mender with greater interest than before. He began to like the fellow.

"Well, what o' that? Not so much stranger, neither. Didn't we travel together all the way from Injiany? D'ye think I was goin' to throw off on him when he got down so he couldn't help hisself? That's not my style. Besides, I'd nothin' else to do, and I 'spect I'd been drunk half the time if it hadn't been for takin' care of the boy. I was a gittin' on a kind of a spree to-night, and was purty considerable how-come-ye-so when you seed me; but I wouldn't a got down as long as he's not able to help hisself."

"You are a good fellow, Billy Moon. Give me your hand," said Brown. Billy extended his hand, and the detective grasped it heartily. "You will lose nothing by your kindness to this poor, sick boy. He has friends who are able and willing to reward you."

"I don't want none o' their reward. I done what I 'spect he'd a done for me if I'd been sick and him well," said Billy. "I haint a fishin' for no reward. That's not my style."

"Is the boy in good hands while you are absent?" asked Brown.

"The best kind," answered Billy. "The boardin' house is kept by a widder woman, who's a motherly old body, and she tuck to the boy right off. She cried over him, and petted him up when he was a ravin' so with the fever, and she sot by him and fanned him, and tuk care of him like his own mother."

"Why can you not take me to him to-night?" asked Brown.

"I s'pose I might; but, you see, I've nothin' but your word for this business, and you're a stranger; so I guess I'll see the boy first."

The detective did not urge the matter further, and permitted Billy to depart alone, after first exacting a promise from him to meet him at the Seventh Avenue Hotel next morning. True to the instinct of his profession, however, he followed the umbrella mender at a distance. Billy re-crossed the river into Pittsburg, and proceeded toward the heart of the city, as if unconscious of being followed. Directly he entered a saloon, and Brown paused to wait until he should come out; but Billy did not even stop at the

bar for a drink, but passed out at the back door into an alley, and thence into another street, thus effectually throwing the detective off his track.

"He can't come none of his detective dodges on me," chuckled Billy. "That's not my style."

Brown grew tired of waiting, and approached the door of the saloon and looked in. A single glance sufficed to show him how he had been tricked, and he gave up the idea of trying to find Harry that night, and proceeded at once to his hotel.

Billy dodged from one street to another for awhile, to effectually baffle his pursuer, should he still continue to follow, and at last entered a small though neat two-story frame building on Twenty-eighth street, near the tracks of the Pennsylvania railroad.

The umbrella mender made his appearance at the appointed place next morning, and conducted the detective to Harry Lawson. The boy had, indeed, passed through a severe attack of fever, and lay on his bed, pale and emaciated, with scarcely strength to extend his hand to grasp that of the officer. He now learned for the first time the extent of Flynn's villainy, for when he was informed that Dr. Blair did not write the note which had sent him forth a homeless wanderer again, he at once attributed the forgery to the right source. He was greatly surprised to learn that his uncle, of whom he had had no previous

knowledge, was also in search of him, and his heart went out in gratitude to the friends who had done so much for him under so many discouraging and suspicious circumstances, and he longed to return to them as soon as possible.

The detective consulted the doctor who had been attending him, and was told that it would not be safe to remove him in less than a week. Brown therefore telegraphed to Dr. Blair that the boy was found and would start for home as soon as it was safe for him to travel. Dr. Blair dispatched the good tidings at once to Mr. Conover, who set out immediately for Pittsburg.

Thus it appeared that the troubles of our fugitive were over, and that all his most sanguine expectations were about to be realized. His heart was full of joy and thankfulness, and the anticipation of the happiness that seemed in store for him did more toward his recovery than all the skill of his kind-hearted physician. Yet occasionally a shudder would pass through his frame, when he remembered that Black Flynn, his mortal enemy, was still at large, and had sworn to destroy him. He had learned from the detective that the tramp was then in the city, and, in spite of the bright prospects before him, he could not shake off a premonition of approaching danger, which haunted him and poisoned his happiness. And

Harry Lawson had cause to fear. Flynn was not a man to be easily foiled in his schemes of vengeance, and before the boy lay a danger more terrible than any through which he had yet passed.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE RIOT AT PITTSBURG.

In the meantime a storm was gathering over the land which was soon to burst in flames, in pillage and in bloodshed. It is not within the scope of this work to discuss the causes which led to the great railroad strike of 1877. That the railroad employes had grievances, many and heavy, is not to be denied. That their employers believed themselves to be in the right is equally probable. But had the two interested parties been left to settle their difficulty without the interference of vicious meddlers, there would have been no destruction of property; no bloodshed; no anarchy. The laboring men of this country—the true workingmen, not the pretenders who disgrace the name—are too intelligent to engage, as a body, in any such scenes of riot and mob violence. It is the irresponsible floating populace, who have no home ties to bind them to society; the vicious, who seek to plunder and destroy; the outcasts of all nations who drift upon our shores and

fasten upon the industries of our country like barnacles to the bottom of a ship; in short, that great American institution "The Man who Tramps," who, watching for every opportunity to profit by the contest between labor and capital, commits deeds of violence in the name of workingmen only that he may plunder from rich and poor alike. Among the many problems which require the exercise of wise legislation this is of greatest importance, at the present time, to the welfare of this country.

What is to be done with the Man Who Tramps? In no other country has this nuisance—nay this terror—assumed such gigantic proportions. In no other country is it possible for this element of society to endanger the life of a nation, for, in no other country, France, perhaps, excepted, is he placed on an equality, politically, with the best citizens of the country. And all must confess that it throws into our political economy an element of danger, when it places on an equality the real citizen, whose interests are indissolubly connected with the prosperity of the country, and those who have no part or concern in its welfare. It places in the hands of designing men a weapon which they can wield for the conquest of wrong over right, when the worthless tramp, this man without a home and desiring none; this leech upon the veins of industry; this ulcer upon the body politic, is permit-

ted to approach the ballot-box with the honest, industrious mechanic and working man, and cast the venal vote which defeats his will. Nor is it into our political economy alone that this virus has been injected. Its influences reach us in our domestic life. Emboldened by the weakness or laxity of the law, the tramp has grown insolent and aggressive. Does not the blush of shame mantle our cheeks when we are told that in this land of the *free* and the home of the *brave* our wives and daughters live in constant terror of assault by these unprincipled and desperate vagabonds? The homes of the pioneers, surrounded by a wilderness, harboring ravenous wolves and skulking savages, were not more unsafe than our homes of today, under the shadows of our school houses and church spires. How long will our legislators close their ears to the cries of violated innocence? How long must the blood of slaughtered helplessness appeal to their hearts in vain? Just as long as political tricksters are permitted to profit by the votes of this element of venality. Shame — burning, damning shame—brand the brow of him who would seek advancement by such means.

The press, the great educator of the people, the real shaper of public sentiment, is strangely, culpably silent upon this subject. It is true that it startles us with glaring head-lines and graphic and ghastly de-

scriptions of the crimes perpetrated by these fiends, and our blood runs cold at the terrible recital. Age in its helplessness, butchered with worse than savage barbarity; beauty and innocence violated with worse than brutish lust; and writers depict these terrible scenes with all the power of dramatic talent, but who among them all has wielded his pen against the source of this evil, or called upon our legislators to enact such laws as will effectually free the land from this worse than Egyptian leprosy?

It is not the province of this story to depict the darker and more damnable deeds of these fiends. It is needless to weave into romance the ghastly realities enacting in our very midst every day. Nor is it the intention of the author to dictate any line of policy looking to the abatement of this evil. But should these pages haply come to the notice of any one intrusted with the duty of framing our laws, to him he would say: All the principles of justice; all the dictates of humanity; your duty to the constituency who have honored you with your preferment; demand that you should act promptly and efficiently in this matter. Let no considerations of policy, that curse of American legislation, induce you to remain silent and close your eyes and ears to this crying evil. He would ask you to remember that the only safety of a free country is in strict adherance to the laws.

As long as a free people are properly protected in their rights, the perpetuity of our institutions is assured. But weak and venal legislation lays the foundation of anarchy, and mob violence, which is becoming so frequent in our land, is the natural outgrowth of the imbecility of the laws. Men will not see their property destroyed, their dearest friends murdered and their homes violated, and patiently await the action of a law which, when it punishes at all, inflicts a penalty by no means commensurate with the offense.

Let the law be our safety in fact as well as in name, and the blessings of the helpless and the innocent will be your reward.

But this is a digression.

The morning of Saturday, July 21, 1877, dawned at Pittsburg upon a scene of tumult. The streets were filled with excited men, and loud threats and denunciations were heard on every hand. The great railroad strike, which had been in progress several days throughout the country, had reached this place, and the railroad employes had ceased to work, and the city was full of idle men. And worse than that, among the crowd, waiting for the threatened outbreak, in order to plunder and destroy, or urging the strikers to deeds of violence, were hundreds of tramps from all parts of the country. There was the lazy,

shiftless vagabond, the rough and the loafer, the pickpocket and the burglar, the highwayman and the incendiary—in short, representatives from all departments of the great fraternity of tramps. These men mingled with the crowd, watching for an opportunity to inaugurate just such a scene as actually occurred later in the day. Black Flynn was there, passing from one group to another, making inflammatory appeals to the passions of the crowd, and prompting them to deeds of violence.

Nor was he alone in this work. Other agitators of the commune were there, busy in trying to incite the populace to riot. Sandy Hines was there, also, with hundreds of his ilk, waiting for an opportunity to employ his peculiar talents. The majority of the railroad men merely laughed at the bombastic appeals of these vicious agitators, for they had no quarrel with society, and did not care to invoke the demon of anarchy, which would bring as much injury upon themselves as upon their employers. But there were many who listened to these specious arguments, and sympathized with these pernicious doctrines, until they were ripe for violence.

As the day passed on the crowd was augmented by numbers of miners and laborers from the oil regions, and the excitement increased, especially when it was rumored that troops from Philadelphia were

marching to disperse the crowd. The excitement appeared to center about the buildings of the Pennsylvania railroad, and there was assembled a dense mass of the populace, many of them, however, mere idle spectators of the scene.

About three o'clock the cry was passed: "The soldiers are coming! The soldiers are coming!" and in a few minutes the head of the column appeared on Twenty-eighth street, the sheriff of Allegheny county and his posse marching in front. Notwithstanding the violent appeals of Flynn and others of his class, no overt act was committed until the Black Hussars of Philadelphia attempted to clear the crossing, when the storm which had been long threatening burst over the devoted city. The troops were assailed with stones and clubs, and many of them were knocked down, and some were severely wounded. It was not in the nature of men with arms in their hands to calmly endure such a fusillade, and they fired a volley into the struggling mass of humanity which filled the crossing and covered the hillside above it. The effects of this fire were terrible, and drove the rioters wild with frenzy. They assailed the troops with such weapons as they could seize, and drove them before them to the round house, where they took refuge from the infuriated mob. Here they were surroun-

ded by a hooting and yelling crowd, who threatened to destroy them.

Then began a scene of terror and devastation.

Gun stores were pillaged, and the rioters even captured a battery and placed it on the heights near the round-house. The railroad here passes through a long, narrow valley, and the numerous tracks were crowded with cars laden with all kinds of goods, delayed by the strike. Not less than three thousand cars were collected here, many of them loaded with oil. Most of these cars were broken open and plundered. Busiest among the maddened crowd were Black Flynn and Sandy Hines, the former inciting the mob to deeds of greater violence and the latter loading himself with valuable articles taken from the cars, which he, with numerous others, had broken open with axes.

In the meantime the torch had been applied to the plundered cars, and, as daylight died away, a surging stream of fire rolled for twenty blocks through that narrow gorge, and night hung above the city almost unheeded amid the glare of the flames. The night passed on in tumult and horror. The boom of cannon burst upon the already terror-laden air, and told that the mob were firing upon the soldiers in the round-house. This was answered by a sharp, quick rattle of musketry from the besieged, and the hor-

rors of battle were added to the horrors of fire. The union depot added its flames to this holocaust to the Man Who Tramps, and the ringing of bells, the sullen boom of the cannon, the roar of the flames and the cries of the excited mob combined to make a scene unrivaled in the history of civilization.

The rioters having run six burning cars against the round-house, the troops were forced to evacuate their place of refuge, and, with their muskets presented, and their fingers upon the triggers, they marched through the crowd, which fell back before them, and permitted them to escape to the fields and woods near East Liberty, after first vainly attempting to secure shelter at the arsenal. The city was left to the rule of the mob, and the work of destruction went on.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE BEGINNING OF THE END.

DURING this time Harry Lawson lay in an upper room in the house already mentioned, almost in the midst of this scene of confusion and destruction. He was still too weak to leave his bed, and Billy Moon sat for a time at the window, which opened from his room upon the street, and reported to him the progress of events, as he beheld them enacted before him. But Billy was too restless to remain long a passive spectator of the stirring scene, and Harry, observing his evident wish to descend to the street, urged him to go, as there was no danger in his remaining alone. Although several houses further down the street had been burned, Billy did not fear that the fire would reach the one in which Harry lay, and needed little persuasion to induce him to descend and mingle with the crowd which surged through the street. The umbrella mender found it easy to join the crowd, but not so easy to detach himself from it when he wished to return, for he was

hemmed in by the struggling mass, and borne irresistably along with it, until he was far removed from his friend. Harry lay for a long time, listening to the tumult in the streets, the roar of the flames, which were now quite audible, and the report of fire-arms, which occasionally sounded above the general uproar. The flames, meantime, drew nearer and nearer, and the woman who kept the house fled with her neighbors in terror from the approaching destruction, too fear-stricken to think of the helpless boy, who lay unconscious of his danger. The flames reached the house and flashed over its roof as if it had been tinder. Harry was not aware that the house was on fire until the burning rafters began to give way, and the blazing beams crashed through the ceiling of the room he occupied. Then, realizing his peril, he summoned all his strength, and crawled from his bed to the window, and called feebly for help. A vast crowd surged backward and forward in the street, apparently unconscious of the conflagration almost above their heads, for all were so intent upon the mighty fires of the large railroad buildings that the burning of a single house appeared to them a thing of little importance. But his cries were heard at last, and several men started to his rescue. Foremost among them was Black Flynn, who was passing at the moment and recognized the boy as he leaned from the

window. Flynn entered the door and sprang up the stairs. A second after, a wiry little fellow, without his hat, and out of breath with struggling through the crowd, sprang after him. Harry, exhausted by the efforts he had made, sank on the floor by the window. He heard some one enter the room, and, turning his head, beheld Flynn approaching him with a knife in his hand.

"I've got you now, you young viper," hissed the tramp. "I'll settle all our scores now, d—n you!"

Harry closed his eyes and uttered a prayer. He heard the sound of another step in the room, then a blow and a heavy fall, and, opening his eyes, he beheld Flynn lying upon the floor among the burning timbers from the ceiling, and Billy Moon standing over him with a chair in his hand.

"No you don't," said Billy. "You'll not murder the young chap while I'm around. That's not my style."

Almost immediately another man entered, and Harry recognized the detective. The two men lifted him tenderly in their arms and bore him from the room, just in time, for the rear part of the roof had fallen in, and the flames were leaping about the door as they passed. Scarcely had they begun their descent when a wall of fire closed between them and the room they had just left. On the stairway they

were met by a stout, gray-headed gentleman, who asked anxiously:

"Is he hurt?"

"No," said Billy. "I's just in time, though."

"Thank God!" said Mr. Conover, as they hurried down the stairs. In the street he continued: "Carry him beyond this howling mob, and find a carriage, if possible. We will take care of you now, my boy."

As they left the scene of the fire a loud cry caused them to turn, and there, at the open window, almost surrounded by the flames, which had now cut off all hope of escape, stood Black Flynn, with fear and horror depicted on his face. The crowd had surged away from the burning building in anticipation of its fall. Flynn gazed forth for a moment, and then sprang upon the window sill as if to leap into the street below, but scarcely had his feet touched the frame when the whole roof fell in with a crash, and he was carried with the blazing timbers into the gulf of fire.

That's the end of him," said Billy. "I'm amost sorry we left him there, but I forgot all about him, I's so anxious to get the boy out."

"He deserved his fate," said the detective. "Yet I would not have left him to die such a death if there had been time to save him, but the fire was at our heels as we came down the stairs."

"I am sorry for him," said Harry, faintly. They at length succeeded in getting clear of the mob, and, entering a carriage, which they were lucky enough to find near by, were driven to the hotel where the detective was stopping. Here Harry learned that his uncle, Mr. Conover, had only just reached Pittsburg, having come on a train with soldiers, which had been stopped by the strikers at a station several miles from the city, and he had been compelled to finish his journey by private conveyance. He had proceeded at once to the hotel where the telegram had informed him he should find the detective. The latter was luckily in, and the two had hurried at once to the house on Twenty eighth street, arriving just in time to assist in the rescue of the boy.

"Still, we would have been too late, had it not been for this brave fellow," said Mr. Conover.

"Yes, it was a close shave," said Billy. "I got mixed up in the crowd, and come purty near not gettin' back at all. I saw that tramp feller when he run into the house, and I knowed him at onct; and, thinks I, Billy, pull out, or the young chap's a goner. I wasn't a minute too soon, neither; for, if he hadn't stopped to talk to the boy, he'd a killed him afore I got there."

"You are a good fellow, Billy Moon," said the detective, "Harry Lawson owes his life to you to-day."

"And I am very grateful," said Harry, extending his hand from the couch on which he lay. Billy took the offered hand and said:

"There, never mind that. What 've I done, I'd like to know, more'n anybody'd a done? I promised to take care of the boy, and I wasn't agoin' to see him murdered by no tramp while I'm around. That's not my style."

"My dear fellow," said Mr. Conover, taking the umbrella mender by the hand, "you shall never regret your action this day. What do you follow?"

"Well, most anything," said Billy. "I'm a umbreller mender, and work at that most of the time; but I lost my kit at Cincinnati, and I 'spect I'll have to knock 'round at somethin' else till I git another."

"Is there anything you particularly desire!" asked Mr. Conover.

"Which?"

"Is there anything in which I can help you?"

"Well, I don't know," said Billy, "less you'd like to give me another kit. Though I don't ask it, mind you; and, if you do, I'll pay you back as soon as I make the money." Mr. Conover smiled, and, approaching the bed where Harry lay, entered into conversation with him in a low tone. After several minutes he turned to Billy.

"I have been consulting with Harry," he said,

"and we have concluded to take you with us, if you will go, and give you better employment than mending umbrellas. You have saved the life of my nephew, and it is but right that yours, henceforth, should be made as easy and happy as we can render it. Will you go?"

Billy studied for a moment, then he said:

"Well, boss, I know you mean what you say, and I'm much obliged to you, but Billy Moon would be like a fish out of water at your fine house, and he'd only be in your way. Besides, I'd be drunk half the time, I 'spect, for I never could hit a soft snap and keep sober, and then you'd wish you'd let me go my way. No, it'd never do. I'm a reg'lar vagerbon', and I 'spect I'll never be anything else. When a chap spends the best part of his life a wanderin' round, and never settles down to anything, it's hard to break him of it. I'd git the blues, and then I'd either git drunk or run away and take to the road agin. If you're a mind to give me a new kit, all right, but you can't make anything but a vagerbon' out'n Billy Moon, if you'd try. Its not my style."

All their persuasion was unavailing, and all they could induce him to take was a small sum of money to replace his lost "kit."

Monday morning came, and the fury of the mob had spent itself, and a feeling of terror filled the

hearts of many who beheld the desolate track of the fiery ruin. Heavy-hearted mechanics and artisans stood about the smoldering embers of their workshops, and looked gloomily forward to months of forced idleness, when they had not the means to live for a week. Some of them, wrought upon by the inflammable eloquence of vicious men, had assisted in the work of destruction which took the bread from the mouths of their wives and babes, but now that the excitement was over, and the result of their madness lay before them in all its black and stern reality, they inwardly cursed the folly which had led them to expect benefit from the wanton destruction of their means of subsistence.

The riot was over, and the tramping fraternity resumed their occupation of wandering, begging, and pilfering, waiting until another such commotion should give them a chance to profit by the rashness of well-meaning but unthinking men, whose misguided efforts to ameliorate the misery of their lot only result in favor of the tramps, the thieves, the outcasts of society, who always seek such opportunities to follow their calling of plunder.

There is one character who has played a prominent part in this drama who must not be overlooked in its conclusion, and, although it will be anticipating the course of events somewhat, I will dispose of him

here, in order that the closing scene may not be marred by the record of his fate. When the rabble of vagrants dispersed Sandy Hines left Pittsburg and returned to Indiana.

One evening he stopped at a toll house to beg for something to eat, and saw a woman hastily rake a pile of money she had apparently been counting at a small table into a drawer as if to conceal it from the sight of the tramp. She refused to give him food, and he left, but did not go far. He concealed himself in a corn field near by, from which place he could see all that transpired at the house, and he satisfied himself that it was occupied by an old man and a woman, who was probably his daughter. Having ascertained that there were no other occupants of the house, he resolved to return in the night and rob them of the toll money, which the woman had so incautiously exposed to his evil gaze.

After all was still and the travel on the road had ceased for the night, he stole up to the house to reconnoiter. The lights were out and the people were evidently asleep. He found an ax leaning against the house, and with this he raised the window of the room where he had seen the money until the fastenings gave way, and, climbing in, he endeavored to burst off the lid of the small table containing the money. This was a more difficult task than he an-

ticipated, and the inmates were aroused. The old man came to the door of the room, and, seeing the robber at his work, cried loudly to his daughter and seized Sandy by the arms. It was but the feeble grasp of age, however, and the burly ruffian tore himself loose and dealt the old man a savage blow on the head with the blade of the ax. His victim sank down upon the floor just as the daughter ran into the room. With one blow of the ax the tramp shattered the frail receptacle of the money, and, seizing the latter, escaped through the window, while the poor woman was screaming over the body of her dead father.

Before morning the whole neighborhood was aroused, and hundreds of excited and determined men were in pursuit of the villain. In the afternoon of the next day he was captured in an old unused barn, several miles from the scene of the tragedy. He was taken into the presence of the woman, who at once recognized him as the murderer of her father, and from thence he was conveyed to the nearest county town and lodged in jail.

But he was not destined to pass through the excitement of another trial, nor to again become the subject of woman's sympathy nor man's mistaken charity. That night a hundred masked men surrounded the jail, the doors were broken in, and the prisoner

dragged forth and hurried away from the town. Those who were aroused by the noise of the passing crowd heard the deep, hoarse voice of a man in deadly terror, pleading for his life, but his petition was received in grim silence. His captors conveyed him to the nearest wood and there improvised a gallows, by throwing a rope over the limb of a tree, and, amid his howls and shrieks for mercy, he was dragged up by the neck and left, a black-faced and ghastly apparition, to frighten into silence the morning songs of the birds.

CHAPTER XXV.

CONCLUSION.

PATIENT reader, the story is nearly told. It only remains to write the happy conclusion. As soon as railroad travel re-opened our friends left Pittsburg on their homeward journey. As they were boarding the train which was to convey Harry from the scene of his last terrible adventure, they saw Billy Moon, who had come to say good-by. The umbrella mender had provided himself with a new kit of tools in a bright tin box, and carried his accustomed bundle of old handles and wires, which he had, somehow, contrived to collect. He was, for a wonder, perfectly sober, and in the jolliest of humors. Our friends took him kindly by the hand, and again expressed their gratitude for his services to Harry. Mr. Conover renewed his offer to provide Billy with a home and better employment, and Harry joined earnestly in entreating him to accompany them, but he said:

"It's kind of you to think of a poor chap like me, and I'll not forget it. It'll be a good thing to think

of, that Billy Moon, the vagerbon', has some good friends, but it'd never do; it's not my style. I know myself better'n you do. I couldn't live no other way but like I've been a doin'. It'd kill me to have to stay round in one place all the time. I'd want to be out on the road agin in less than a week. Le's say no more about it. Good-by, Harry, my boy. When you're in your fine home, with all your friends about you to love and take care of you, don't forget the time when you and Billy Moon paddled along the road together, not knowin' where we was a goin' to sleep at night; and don't forget that there's many a poor feller what hasn't had no chance in life, and may be it's not his fault that he's not fit for nothin' 'cept jest to wander from place to place, like Billy Moon, with no friends and no home. Good-by, and thank you all."

It was useless to press him further. They shook him kindly by the hand and entered the cars. As the train moved off Harry looked from the window and saw him standing where they had left him, gazing after them with as near a look of melancholy as ever came into his good-natured face.

On the evening of one of the last days of July Mrs. Blair and her daughter sat on the porch in front of the house, awaiting the return of the doctor, who had gone in the carriage to Calusa. There was more

anxiety depicted on their countenances, especially that of Carrie, than the mere fact of the doctor's absence seemed to warrant. In short, they had that day received a dispatch, announcing that Mr. Conover, the detective and Harry would arrive at Calusa by the evening train, and it was the anticipation of meeting him, to whom she had yielded up all the wealth of her pure young heart, that gave the bright flush to Carrie's cheeks and the expectant though softened light to her eyes. She had been torturing herself with all sorts of dismal fancies during the day. She remembered that no words of love had passed between them. There had been nothing but that sweet intuition which inclines young hearts together, yet plainer than words had been this mutual revelation of their unspoken love, and during all the time of their separation their souls had yearned toward each other with a deeper, purer affection than maturer hearts, seamed and seared by the scars of life's unceasing battle, can ever feel again.

During his homeward journey there had been one happy thought ever present in Harry's mind: "I shall meet *her*," and the words echoed in his heart until it leaped in his bosom with eager and joyous anticipation, and the rushing engine seemed, to his impatience, to creep like a snail upon its way. But this Carrie could not know, and her maidenly mod-

esty forbade her to admit the hope which was knocking at her heart.

"He may have forgotten me," said her fears. "He may not have loved me at all." And so she tortured herself with unreasoning doubts as the time dragged wearily on.

Her mother attempted to engage her in conversation, but her answers were short and irrelevant, and Mrs. Blair desisted, and they sat in silence, watching for the appearance of the travelers.

A thin cloud of dust arose in the road where it skirted the wood, far away across the fields. Both the watchers saw it, but neither spoke, for they were as yet uncertain. But when the top of the carriage was plainly visible above the fences, Carrie cried:

"They are coming."

She rose to her feet and gazed a moment toward the approaching vehicle, and then, with her face ablaze with blushes, she entered the house. Mrs. Blair smiled at her daughter's agitation, but it was a smile of affection and indulgence.

The carriage turned up the lane to the house and paused in front of the door. First to descend was Dr. Blair, and after him Mr. Conover. Then Harry came feebly forth, and the three approached the house. Mrs. Blair met them at the gate and took the boy in her motherly arms and pressed him to her bosom.

"What a terrible anxiety you have given us all, foolish boy," she said. "Could you not trust our love, that you left us without a word? But there, I will not scold you now. I am too glad to get you back again."

Harry returned her caress, but glanced uneasily about, as if not entirely satisfied.

"Where's—where's—Carrie?" he asked, while a flush overran his pale cheeks as he spoke.

"She is in the house," said Mrs. Blair.

Harry looked disappointed.

"She does not care for me," he thought. "She does not even meet me to welcome me back."

When he entered the room Carrie was standing at the opposite side, her color coming and going, and her attitude half of fear, half of eagerness. The eyes of the boy and girl met and that quick glance told more of love and hope and trust than this poor pen has power to record. Harry extended his hand.

"Have you no welcome for the prodigal?" he said.

"Yes, Harry, I am glad—" their hands met, and then—nay, sneer not, you in whose poor withered hearts the well-springs of love have perished in the desert of conventional life—and then—their lips.

Carrie started from her lover with a burning face and glanced about her like a startled fawn, but they were alone. Mr. Conover was engaged in earnest

conversation with Dr. Blair and his wife upon the porch, where they paused when Harry entered the room. Then yielding to his caressing arm Carrie laid her sunny head upon his breast, where it rested like a half-frightened bird.

When, after a few minutes, the others entered the room, the two young people sat upon the sofa together in all the radiant happiness of newly plighted troth.

The evening passed pleasantly away, amid mutual explanations. Harry related his adventures to eager listeners, and Carrie pressed closer to his side and shuddered at the dangers he had encountered. Matters of business were also discussed, and plans laid for the future, but of these, more anon.

Weeks passed on, and, under the gentle nursing of Mrs. Blair and Carrie, Harry soon regained his strength, and the bloom of health came back to his cheeks, and the light of energy to his eyes. And Carrie—gentle, fair-haired, blue-eyed Carrie—she flitted about like a sunbeam, lighting the house with the radiance of her joy. The long silent piano laughed in rippling music at her merry touch, and the voice of song again gladdened that happy home. For the lost was found—the loved one had returned.

Mr. Conover remained a guest at the doctor's house, waiting for Harry's recovery, when it was

arranged that the latter should accompany his uncle to New York, there to attend school for a year and fit himself to enter a prosperous mercantile business in which Mr. Conover had purchased a partnership. But there was to be no separation of the newly-united friends. Dr. Blair, who had long contemplated retiring from practice, had completed arrangements for the sale of his farm, and his practice he had disposed of to a younger man, who was to take his place, and he and his family were to accompany Mr. Conover to New York. So there was to be no cloud in the sky of the happiness which, after long waiting, had come to them all.

After Harry had sufficiently recovered to be able to travel he visited the old farm-house from which he first began his "tramp." John Shannon was at work in the fields when he arrived, and Mrs. Shannon met him at the door. At first she did not recognize the tall, graceful youth who extended his hand to her, but when she did she turned first red, then pale, and sat down and covered her face with her apron and cried:

"Oh, Harry! Harry! have you come back? Can you ever forgive the poor old woman who let her miserable temper drive you away?"

"With all my heart, Mother Shannon," said Harry. "The readier, since it has resulted in so much happi-

ness. But for my flight ftom this house I would never have known Dr. Blair and his wife, and—and—Carrie."

"I didn't mean half I said, Harry," sobbed Mrs. Shannon. "I was just a cross, foolish old woman, and I didn't mean to drive you away. But John must know that you are here. I'll ring the bell." The clatter of the great dinner bell on a post at the kitchen door—a new acquisition since Harry's departure—brought John Shannon to the house in a great hurry to learn the cause of the sound at so unusual an hour. The farmer recognized Harry at once, and first grasped his extended hand and then clasped him to his breast, while the tears filled his eyes.

Harry passed that night in the little room up under the roof, although Mrs. Shannon declared that he should not sleep in such a place, he should have the best bed in the house; but Harry insisted on occupying his old room, and had his way. Here he lay awake far into the night, recalling the past with all its mingled misery and joy, and fell asleep at last with prayers of thankfulness in his heart for the great happiness which seemed in store for him in the future.

In due time the removal to New York was made, and Harry entered a mercantile school to fit himself for the new duties before him. He was still an in-

mate of the kind doctor's home, as was also Mr. Conover, who, having no family of his own, adopted that of the doctor, to use his own words.

"Besides, I feel that we are related, or soon will be," he said, glancing archly toward Harry and Carrie, who sat together, turning the leaves of the same book.

The doctor and Mrs. Blair smiled, and the young people blushed, with looks half of embarassment, half of radiant happiness.

And here I must leave the reader to write his own sequel, only stipulating that the wedding be not too long deferred.

THE END.

INDIANA.

I.

I LOVE New England's sea-girt strand,
Where, his Atlantic voyage o'er,
The day steps lightly to the land,
And journeys westward from the shore.

II.

For all her sun-lit hills are fair,
And silver-tongued are all her streams,
And joys, that blessed my spirit there,
Still mingle with my sweetest dreams.

III.

And oft, when vagrant fancy flings
Her baubles down, as day declines,
I hear in memory's rustling wings
The singing of the mountain pines.

IV.

But fairer scenes and softer skies
Await the later day's caress,
Where Indiana, smiling, lies,
The blossom of the wilderness.

V.

Her forests spread their arms to greet
A rosy flood of summer air,
And plains fall fainting at their feet,
O'erburdened with the wealth they bear.

VI.

Here singing streams in gladness run
Through vocal wood and flowery lea,
And carry southward to the sun
The pearls he borrowed from the sea.

VII.

Triumphant march the woodmen beat,
Where progress moves all conquering,
While homesteads rise about her feet,
Like roses in the path of spring.

VIII.

Till, fair as ocean billows, glide
The waves across the harvest plain,
And sweeter than the murmuring tide
The rustling of the golden grain.

IX.

Oh! dearer is our lovely vale,
With hamlets from the forest won,
Than all the pine-clad hills, where trail
The sea-wet tresses of the sun.

X.

Fair Indiana, may the hand
Of progress touch thee but to bless;
And peace, with plenty, crown the land
That blossoms from the wilderness.

JUNE.

I.

SWEET May, upon her flowery bier,
Lies pallid now, her scepter gone,
And June, the queen of all the year,
Has put her crown of roses on;
And round her lovely form she twines
A zone of honeysuckle vines.

II.

Bright butterflies and beauteous things
About her sunny tresses play;
The humming bird, on trembling wings,
With rapture meets her on the way,
And, drinking kisses from her lips,
Grows drunken with the sweets he sips.

III.

The air is heavy with perfume
Where, underneath the locust trees,
Or ankle deep in clover bloom,
She walks, surrounded by her bees,
While winds, that follow in her train,
Go sporting through the ripening grain.

IV.

She scatters blossoms, wild and sweet,
With lavish hand along the lanes,
And by the brook her rosy feet
Grow redder with the berry stains.
And buttercups, to see her pass,
Stand tip-toe in the meadow grass.

V.

She stoops in tenderness to set
Her blossoms on the tomb of May,
And plants the fragrant mignonette
To hide the hyacinth's decay,
And hangs the morning-glory vine
With flagon cups of dewy wine.

VI.

The roses breathe a fragrant sigh,
Where their sweet pæony sisters fell;
The languid poppy blossoms lie
Asleep on beds of asphodel;
And birds, too full of joy to sing,
Sit, nestling, where the jasmines cling.

VII.

And love-lies-bleeding on the spot
Where early daisies wooed the bees,
And sad, the pale forget-me-not
Bends o'er the dead anemones,
And fair verbenas twine and cling
Where crocus blossoms met the spring.

VIII.

Above the faded daffodils,
Where lilacs shed their tears of bloom,
The lily's swinging censer spills
A dewy incense on their tomb,
Till portulacas cease to weep,
And fold their rosy hands in sleep.

IX.

And Arethusa, by the brook,
Has put her royal purple on,

And stands, a queen, where Caltha shook
Her golden tresses in the sun;
And willows set their harps atune
In songs of welcome to the June.

X.

And I bow down before her feet,
As pilgrim at some holy shrine,
And drink her breath with roses sweet,
As bacchanalians drink of wine,
Till round my heart such raptures throng,
That all my soul goes out in song.

THE REAPERS.

I.

I SAW the morn half-wakened stand
Upon the glowing hills, and fair
The fingers of her rosy hand
Played through her wealth of golden hair;
The music of the vale was sweet
With tinkling sounds of stirring herds,
And gay woodpeckers loudly beat
The morning drum that wakes the birds.

II.

Where sweet wild roses lined the brook,
The winds were bathing in perfume,
Their wings the insect nomads shook,
And issued from their tents of bloom;

The dew hung bright on tree and plant,
And o'er the yellow harvest field
The early sunbeams fell aslant
Like javelins on a golden shield.

III.

Among the ranks of ripening grain,
I saw the wind-waves chasing run,
As billows sport upon the main,
And, seaward roll, meet the sun;
And while the shadows still were long,
And covered half the plain below,
Across the field, with shout and song,
I saw the reapers come and go.

IV.

Among the harvest sheaves I stood,
When day's last embers faintly burned,
And shadows of the gnomon wood
Were eastward on their dial turned;
And blotted from the gleaming grain,
Was all the morning's rosy glow,
Yet still across the harvest plain
I saw the weary reapers go.

V.

And thus, I sighed, when man has wrought
Through all the long and burning day,
To bind the gleaming sheaves of thought,
Till life in twilight blends away—
He finds that shadows have concealed
The glories of the harvest plain,
And stands a reaper yet afield
Among the ripe, ungathered grain.

AN AUTUMN REVERIE.

I.

ONE day I found within the wood
A spot by foliage overhung,
A sad, forbidding solitude,
Where e'en the robin's song unsung,
Died quivering on his frightened heart;
Where e'en the stream that crossed its gloom,
Impatient, tore the boughs apart,
And leaped into the light and bloom.

II.

I came again, when Autumn burned
The Summer's dying sacrifice,
And lo! her chastening hand had turned
The gloom into a paradise.
I heeded not that round me lay
The fallen glories of the wood,
I only felt the golden day
That flooded all the solitude.

III.

I know a weary heart, to-day,
O'ershadowed by its hopes delayed,
But, silently, they drop away,
As summer leaflets fall and fade.
As one by one they fall and die,
The overhanging gloom is riven,
And widening vistas, toward the sky,
Let in a larger share of heaven.

FORTY YEARS OLD.

I.

I'M forty to-day, but the heart of a boy
In my bosom is pulsing away;
My soul is so glad in its fullness of joy,
That I sing like a child at its play.
Life's morning of beauty I can not forget;
So fair was the day it foretold,
That hues of its dawning encircle me yet,
Though I know I am forty years old.

II.

I know that the wrinkles should be on my brow,
And that I should be sober and staid;
But there is a laugh to smooth over, somehow,
Every furrow that sorrow hath made.
I can not be solemn and glum if I would,
And the reason is easily told,
Each ill that arises I match with a good
And my pleasures are forty years old.

III.

Perhaps I should delve into books like a ghoul
For the skeleton relics of thought,
But dearer to me is its fetterless soul,
That the book-makers never have caught.
I ramble the fields when the hues of the morn,
Like the buds of the roses, unfold;
I mock the brown quail as it pipes in the corn,
And forget I am forty years old.

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